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Christian Emphasis
in Y.M.C.A. Program

BY

PAUL M. LIMBERT

52

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in Y.M.C.A. Program

A Guide to Policy and Practice for
Young Men's Christian Associations

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PAUL M. LIMBERT

*A Publication of the Committee on
Christian Emphasis and Method of the
Young Men's Christian Associations*

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FOREWORD

How Christian is the Young Men's Christian Association? This question is being asked in a wistful and self-critical mood by many who are close to the heart of this movement, and who have responsibility as members or professional leaders in guiding it.

This handbook is not primarily an attempt to answer this question, nor is it simply a descriptive picture of the Y.M.C.A. as it is. It aims rather to suggest how Associations can be made more Christian—how they can truly fulfill their function as one part of the living stream which has come down the ages as the Christian Movement.

Any person who is actively associated with a Y.M.C.A. will have many moments when he lifts his eyes beyond his immediate responsibilities as a committee member or a group leader to the ultimate aims which give meaning to this century-old world-wide enterprise of which he is a part. As he does this, he will find that he is asking himself the questions for which Dr. Limbert has suggested answers in this handbook: Why should we be concerned about Christian goals? What do we mean by a Christian emphasis in the Y.M.C.A.? And, more concretely, how can Christian purposes be realized in the program of a local Association?

Answers to these questions as given in this compendium have grown from the thinking of many groups in recent years and from actual successful practice in Associations over the entire land. The Committee on Christian Emphasis and Method of the National Board of Y.M.C.A.'s is deeply grateful to Paul Limbert for his discerning use of the materials that have come to his hand. He has brought clarity of interpretation and lucidity of expression to the task of stating why and how Y.M.C.A.'s can achieve Christian goals through their programs.

To every secretary or interested layman I would suggest reading this book with a pencil in hand. Whenever the reader comes upon a suggestion that seems workable in his Association, he may put a check in the margin. After having read the entire book, he can go back and pick out the "priorities"

among possible next steps, so that progress may be made toward a wiser and deeper Christian emphasis in the program.

Not every Association can do everything that is suggested here, but most Associations can adopt many of the proposals put forth. Obviously, it is not necessary to try to do everything at once, but it should be feasible to begin doing something at once. In the New Testament figure of the leaven we find a picture that aptly describes the process envisaged by this handbook.

Upon each age is laid the task anew of applying the mind and spirit of Christ to its own situation, and for these turbulent years when there is merging of many minds and the mingling of many cultures, this handbook is full of fruitful suggestions.

ROLLAND W. SCHLOERB

*Chairman, Committee on Christian Emphasis and Method
National Board of Y.M.C.A.'s*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It will be apparent that in the preparation of this handbook we have drawn freely from earlier statements relating to religion in the Young Men's Christian Association. The review in Part II of specific programs illustrating a variety of expressions of Christian emphasis is made possible only through the response of scores of Associations to requests for information.

In the planning of this book and the preparation of the manuscript the writer has had the continuous counsel of the Chairman of the National Board's Committee on Christian Emphasis and Method, Dr. Rolland W. Schloerb, minister of the Hyde Park Baptist Church in Chicago. Other members of this committee have given encouragement and advice.

Appreciation is due also to others who have read certain portions of the manuscript critically: J. Edward Sproul, National Board program executive; Owen E. Pence, Director of the Bureau of Records, Studies and Trends; George W. Corwin, Secretary for Work with Boys; J. Raymond Bingham, Director of the Motion Picture Bureau; L. K. Hall of Association Press, under whose direction the book has been printed; and others. Miss Constance Fontaine has assisted immeasurably in the preparation of the manuscript.

Special gratitude is expressed to Judson J. McKim, formerly General Secretary of the Cincinnati Association, for his study of Y.M.C.A. Chapels, which comprises the bulk of Chapter X.

This book has been prepared under the sponsorship of the Committee on Christian Emphasis and Method and at the urgent request of both the National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s and many local Associations. The writer has sought to reflect accurately the viewpoint of the Y.M.C.A. Movement and to record faithfully the present status of Christian emphasis in the program of Y.M.C.A.'s, in order that this handbook may actually be a *guide to policy and practice*, aiding local Associations in developing and evaluating their own programs in harmony with the basic purposes of the Y.M.C.A. Movement.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword by Rolland W. Schloerb	iii

PART ONE

STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A.'S

I. Why We Are Concerned about Christian Emphasis	1
II. Characteristics of the Y.M.C.A. with Respect to Religion	7
III. Marks of a Significant Christian Emphasis	17

PART TWO

A REVIEW OF CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN CURRENT Y.M.C.A. PROGRAMS

IV. Boys' Clubs and Other Organized Groups	31
V. Relationships with Individuals	45
VI. Study Groups and Forums	58
VII. Special Religious Gatherings	71
VIII. Relationships with Churches and Schools	81
IX. Newer Program Resources: Recordings, Radio, Films	97
X. Religious Settings and Symbols	105
XI. The Experience of Leadership	113
XII. Seeing the Program Whole	122
Appendices	129
A. Affirmations of Christian Faith	129
B. Realizing the Christian Purposes of the Y.M.C.A.	131
C. Criteria for Judging Christian Emphasis in Y.M.C.A. Program	132
D. Devotional Services for Boards and Committees	136
E. Services of Installation and Dedication	140
Index of Associations	145
Topical Index	147

PART ONE

**STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS
IN Y.M.C.A.'S**



CHAPTER I

WHY WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS

The Young Men's Christian Association we regard as being in its essential genius a world-wide fellowship of men and boys united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the purpose of developing Christian personality and building a Christian society.

THE CENTENNIAL YEAR, commemorating the founding of the Young Men's Christian Association in London in 1844, was an occasion for stock-taking and soul-searching. Few Association leaders shared in the recognition of a century of growth and in the planning for a second century of service without taking a fresh look at the Christian purpose of this Movement. Of the central religious motivation of that little group of twelve young men in London there can be no doubt. Of the intent of official bodies during these hundred years to maintain the essential Christian character of the Y.M.C.A. Movement there is no question. The impartial survey more than a decade ago of the work of Young Men's and Young Women's Associations around the world described the Associations at their best as "fellowships of men and boys, women and girls, seeking to develop personality, in accord with character ideals based upon the New Testament and particularly upon the personality of Jesus."¹

There is difference of judgment, however, about the adequacy of the forms through which this religious purpose has found expression and about the trend of the Movement in recent years. Has this historic Christian emphasis of the Y.M.C.A. been gaining or losing ground? Is there a tendency now to think of the Y.M.C.A. less as a religious association and more as a social agency? To answer these questions is not

¹*International Survey of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations*, International Survey Committee (New York, 1932), p. 353.

2 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

the main concern of this book, but the fact that they are being raised gives point to this study, which is essentially a review and a critique of what Y.M.C.A.'s are actually doing by way of Christian emphasis. It is highly appropriate that one outcome of the Centenary should be a fresh examination of what is involved in realizing more fully the Christian purposes of the Young Men's Christian Association.

WARTIME PRESSURES

Such a study is even more timely in view of the pressing demand for religious vitality in these wartime years. Whether World War II is bringing a genuine renewal of Christian faith is debatable. War, although essentially destructive, has been a creative force in the inner lives of some individuals and nations. As we deal with men returning from the armed services, we can not be sure that they will be more regular in church attendance or more Christian in outlook; but we can be sure that many of these men will be ready as never before to give a hearing to the claims and counsels of religion, if we know how to take advantage of the opportunity. War does not necessarily make men religious, but it usually makes them think and it compels them to search for more solid moorings. The pertinent question for a local Association, therefore, is this: is the Christian emphasis in our program now likely to command the respect and challenge the participation of a young man coming home from barracks or battlefield?

The war has had its profound effect also upon the spiritual lives of those who stayed at home. Boys and girls too young to don a uniform have often found unfortunate outlets for their pent-up emotions. Families shaken loose from familiar surroundings find it hard to put down roots again. Minority groups, frustrated in their desire for a normal share in the war effort, experience mounting tensions and may break out at any time in impatient bitterness. Citizens who have been irritated by wartime restrictions on business or personal life may try to throw off restraints so quickly that economic stability will be threatened. Petty people with grievances against other cultural or political groups are taking advantage of wartime restlessness to sow seeds of hate and violence. And many persons with high social motives and religious zeal will face a wave of disillusionment as the postwar settlements around the world

fall far short of their idealistic dreams for justice and peace.

The years immediately ahead will indeed be a "time for greatness" in religion. They will test even the faithful to the limit. What does the Y.M.C.A. have to offer as its contribution toward meeting these needs of the spirit? Is our Christian emphasis strong enough and rooted deeply enough to serve the youth and adults of our constituency during these trying times? Again, one should not expect complete answers from this handbook, but questions of this kind convey a sense of the urgency under which the study has been carried on.

THE SCOPE OF THIS STUDY

The focus of attention throughout this handbook is on *program*. We do not presume to make a fresh critical analysis of the objectives of the Y.M.C.A. Movement, nor an authoritative statement of the relationships that ought to exist between Y.M.C.A.'s and churches. The scope of our study is more modest: to describe ways in which the Christian purpose of the Young Men's Christian Association is now being expressed and to suggest points at which the best current practice shows the way to a more effective Christian emphasis.

It will become clear, however, that this study cannot be confined to a segment of the Y.M.C.A. program that may be specifically labelled "religious." Strictly speaking, this is not so much a study of "religious program" as of *religious emphasis in program*. In fact, one of our major lines of inquiry is to see *how one may identify and evaluate the Christian emphasis in any phase of Association activity or relationship*.

It follows that we shall not be looking so much for new elements that may be added to an Association's program in order to make it religious as for ways of making the most of the opportunities for Christian emphasis that are *inherent* in our Movement. In a discussion of boys' work from the standpoint of Christian values a secretary remarked that he finds himself preoccupied with other activities and does not know how to fit religion in. This is of course a complete misunderstanding of our central thesis: namely, *that Christian emphasis is not another item to be added to an already crowded program, but that it will make a difference in all that we are now doing*.

Young Men's Christian Associations today need no new

4 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

charter for Christian emphasis. What their leaders do need is a burning conviction of the central importance of our Christian purpose in times like these and continued experiment with effective methods of interpretation and demonstration adapted to the particular conditions and resources of this day.

Granted the soundness of this approach, we may regard this study as dealing largely with the question: What resources for Christian emphasis do we have at our disposal? Any judgment concerning what Y.M.C.A.'s ought to be doing by way of Christian emphasis depends upon a clear recognition of what we are as a movement. We have a century of tradition; certain patterns of structure and procedure are fairly well set. These we must take into account realistically, not to be bound by them but to find in them our starting-point and our strategy. We cannot jump out of our own skin; ours must be a Christian emphasis appropriate to the relationships and resources existing within Young Men's Christian Associations as we know them in the United States. If we look at our situation from this point of view, we shall be neither defensive nor cynical; we can examine with a fair measure of objectivity points at which our Association practices are now strong or weak.

In later chapters we shall make use of specific reports that are at hand from hundreds of local Associations of all types in all sections of the United States. Yet there will be few tabulations. This is not a survey in the sense of being a comprehensive quantitative assembly of facts about Y.M.C.A. program, valuable as such a study would be. It represents, rather, a careful analysis of concepts, activities and procedures that reflect the current Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. programs. Our purpose is quite practical: to provide a reliable review of how Associations are now seeking to realize the Christian purposes of our Movement and to develop a series of standards by which local leaders—laymen and employed officers—can appraise their own Associations. The times call for prompt action in strengthening the Y.M.C.A. Movement at the point of Christian emphasis. We probably do not have at hand enough data to make a definitive evaluation of the quality of this program, but we surely know enough about the resources and responsibilities of Associations in this field to continue to move forward in vigorous experimentation.

NOTE ON METHOD

To supplement information about Christian emphasis gained from personal contacts and annual reports, two brief questionnaires were sent to all Y.M.C.A.'s except Student Associations and U.S.O.-Y.M.C.A. Clubs. One inquiry, entitled "Devotional Services under Y.M.C.A. Auspices," was related to clubs and other regular groups within local Associations. The second, "Special Religious Programs," asked for information about single events and series of special meetings with a definite religious emphasis.

One hundred thirty-nine Associations returned the first questionnaire; 239 replied to the second inquiry. (In 1944, approximately 1,000 Y.M.C.A.'s, excluding Student Associations, submitted reports for the Year Book.) The returns from the second questionnaire came from thirty-three states and the District of Columbia, distributed as indicated by the table below. From these Associations 233 single events of a religious nature were reported—*e.g.*, an Easter sunrise service, a special staff gathering—and 251 series of special religious meetings.

Although these special requests brought together the most extensive data on religious programs in Y.M.C.A.'s that have been compiled in recent years, there are definite gaps and limitations in the information thus assembled:

1. There is no guarantee that we have in these reports a true sample of the 1,000 Associations. It is likely that our data represent a better than average practice, because of the tendency of an Association with a very limited program not to respond to such an inquiry.

2. Those Associations that responded, with a few exceptions, reported only a fraction of their total programs that have a Christian emphasis. The inquiry was weighted in favor of the more obvious and specifically religious programs.

3. There is an inherent difficulty in reducing religious experiences to numerical terms and comparable descriptions. The Year Book Committee has not been able to devise any satisfactory form of reporting a religious emphasis, since it is apparent that a wide range of activities may express religious values.

In spite of these limitations, it is believed that a sufficient body of information is at hand about the Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program to sketch an authentic picture of the present status of this emphasis and to provide a basis for a fruitful dis-

6 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

cussion of the directions that this emphasis ought to take in the years ahead.

Alabama	2	Minnesota	8
Arizona	3	Mississippi	2
California	10	Missouri	5
Colorado	2	Nebraska	6
Connecticut	6	New Hampshire	2
District of Columbia	1	New Jersey	17
Florida	1	New York	33
Georgia	2	North Carolina	6
Idaho	1	Ohio	21
Illinois	18	Oklahoma	1
Indiana	7	Oregon	3
Iowa	4	Pennsylvania	36
Kansas	1	Texas	2
Louisiana	2	Virginia	2
Maryland	2	Washington	5
Massachusetts	12	West Virginia	1
Michigan	11	Wisconsin	4

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE Y.M.C.A. WITH RESPECT TO RELIGION

MANY HAVE BEEN the suggestions from both friends and critics concerning what ought to be the Y.M.C.A.'s emphasis on religion. Too often these counsels have not been based on a full appreciation of the basic structure and philosophy of the Y.M.C.A. Movement. We will be in a better position to look critically at the present practices of Associations if we review the approaches to religion that have been characteristic of this Movement. A Young Men's Christian Association is not exactly a church nor a school nor a recreation center. It has certain distinctive purposes and ways of operating. The standards which should govern its approach to religion ought to grow out of its own tradition at its best. Some things a Y.M.C.A. can do peculiarly well; at other points it is inherently limited. *In light of its own "essential genius," what kind of religious emphasis may we reasonably expect to find in a Young Men's Christian Association?*

Although this inquiry necessarily involves frequent reference to the history of the Y.M.C.A. Movement, we are thinking here not so much of past incidents as of present realities. We are looking for characteristics so deeply imbedded in Y.M.C.A. tradition that they are still functioning as dynamic factors which may shape our course in the years ahead.

EVANGELICAL MOTIVATION

As one reads the literature of our Movement, he cannot help being impressed by a concern for "the spiritual condition of young men." The student of church history identifies the Young Men's Christian Association as a product of the Protestant Evangelical Movement, associated particularly with the name of John Wesley, that developed in the eighteenth century in England and Germany and soon spread to America.

8 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

Men like George Williams were primarily concerned about winning young men from a lower plane of living to a point where each would commit himself without reserve to Jesus Christ and his way of life. A large number of lay and professional leaders in the Y.M.C.A. today, particularly the older men, still would express their central motivation in terms of "winning boys and young men to Christ." Most of the others would accept the basic assumptions embodied in this phrase but would want to interpret this evangelical emphasis in broader terms than some of their older colleagues.

The root meaning of "evangelical" as seen in light of the whole Christian tradition needs to be carefully defined if its implications for the Y.M.C.A. are to be fully grasped.

1. Christian commitment is more than "character building." It involves more than a change of behavior here and there; it is a change of "heart"—that is, a *fundamental re-orientation of the inner motives and loyalties*. In simple Biblical terms, it is a commitment of the whole person to God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength." Whether such an experience comes gradually or with dramatic suddenness, it means that one's life gets a new focus, is organized around a Person who in human form revealed supremely the nature and will of God.

2. Christian commitment involves, therefore, more than the acceptance of a moral code; it brings a *personal experience of spiritual renewal*; it results in an inner vitality that finds creative expression in the varied and often unforeseen circumstances of daily living. To follow Christ has meant not only new ideas about what is right and wrong, but new-found power to do the right. One characteristic result of such an experience is a burning desire to be of service; another is an urge to speak one's convictions boldly, whether or not they gain popular approval.

3. The term "evangelical" is not to be identified with any particular form of evangelism. There is room for wide variation in ways of presenting the Christian message to individuals and groups, as the history of Christianity abundantly testifies. The quiet, persistent and oft-times indirect approach is as truly a way of winning persons to Christ as the more direct challenge in individual interviews or mass meetings. The essential element is a *deep-seated concern to share with others*

truths about life, as revealed through Jesus, which one has experienced for himself.

4. The evangelical emphasis is not confined to Protestantism. Spelled with a capital letter, the Evangelical Movement can be dated as an outgrowth in the eighteenth century of a reaction against formalism and regimentation in religion. But the emphasis on good news (evangel) goes back of course to the message and mission of Jesus himself; the prevailing doctrine of the Christian Church, both Catholic and Protestant, has been in this sense evangelical. Nor can we overlook the fact that the Evangelical Revival was a protest against certain practices and emphases *within* Protestantism itself. This evangelical motivation, therefore, is to be regarded not as sectarian or denominational but *broadly and basically Christian*.

5. Finally, the evangelical emphasis is by no means to be interpreted in individualistic terms alone. If anything is crystal clear about the teaching of Jesus it is that *the whole person is to be committed to God and his Kingdom*. The first great command to love God with heart, mind, soul, and strength (the original "fourfold" emphasis!) has an inseparable corollary—to love one's neighbor as himself. As Christians we must never allow "personal" religion and the "social" gospel to be set over against each other. The more personal one's religion is, the more completely it affects his whole person—and therefore all his relationships. Unless one is striving with all his might as a Christian to express his inner longings and insights into business affairs and racial relationships and political responsibilities, as well as into his daily contacts at home and in play, he had better re-examine the depth of his Christian commitment.

In this basic objective of the Y.M.C.A. Movement—to lead youth to personal commitment to Christ and his way of life—we have, then, one criterion by which to judge the Christian emphasis, both actual and potential, in Association programs today. Clearly this is a point where the Y.M.C.A. is closely aligned in purpose with the Christian Church. Here, too, we have a clue to the motivation of the World Service program, which has led American Y.M.C.A.'s to take a large share in the expansion of this movement to thirty-two other countries, paralleling the missionary enterprise of the churches.

This is not to say that all members share consciously in the

basic Christian purpose of the Y.M.C.A. The evangelical motivation is characteristic of the "inner circle" only of most Associations. Thousands are in the membership only for limited and quite specific purposes. This factor does not necessarily constitute a weakness; it may be a source of great strength, in that persons with high purposes have an unusual opportunity to influence others so that they too will come to share these purposes.

LAY RESPONSIBILITY

From the beginning the Young Men's Christian Association has been primarily an organization of Christian laymen. Usually these men have been loyal and active in their own churches also, but they have found the Y.M.C.A. a particularly effective channel for expressing their common Christian concerns in fellowship and service. The clergy have been welcomed into membership; frequently they have been represented on boards and committees; but never, even in Roman Catholic countries, have the control of policies and the dominant leadership been vested in the clergy. The Y.M.C.A. has been hailed frequently as the greatest laymen's movement within Protestantism. According to Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, General Secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, "The Y.M.C.A. has been a powerful force in producing lay leadership within Protestantism."

The lay character of the Y.M.C.A. Movement, a source of great strength, also sets certain limitations. Not being theologically trained, laymen often minimize the importance of a systematic study of the basis of Christian faith. They move across denominational lines more easily than the clergy, but they tend to underestimate the importance of the Church as a corporate community. Being involved in the everyday work of the world, laymen are likely to be less critical of the existing social order than the clergy. Unless the laymen who control Association policies are drawn from a wide cross-section of the population, the Y.M.C.A. tends to be dominated by a middle-class economic and social outlook.

INCLUSIVE CONSTITUENCY

The Y.M.C.A. has scrupulously avoided identifying itself exclusively with any single branch of the Christian Church.

Of the twelve men who gathered in George Williams' room, in 1844, three were members of the Church of England, three were Methodists, three were Independents (Congregational), and three were Baptists. As Sherwood Eddy puts it: "Instead of talking about union, these men united and began to work. They had never heard the word 'ecumenical' but soon their followers were working for the *world*. This was almost the first such union of men of all denominations for Christian service regardless of creed."²

The patterns of organizational relationship between Y.M.-C.A.'s and churches have varied with the years, as indicated by Mr. Wiley's recent historical study.³ The Y.M.C.A. is non-ecclesiastical, although clearly Protestant in heritage and outlook. It is still a moot question how Y.M.C.A.'s can be most effectively related to the local and national federations of Protestant Churches. Our focus here, however, is on constituency rather than organization and the following facts must be kept in mind in appraising the Christian emphasis of Associations:

- Y.M.C.A.'s in the United States include in their membership an increasing number of boys and young men of the Roman Catholic Church. A recent study of constituency in a sampling of Associations indicated that about twenty-five per cent of the members are Catholic in affiliation. This proportion is too high for some sections of the country, although in a number of Eastern industrial centers more than half of the Y.M.C.A. membership is Roman Catholic. Catholic members, however, tend to hold their membership for a shorter period than Protestants.
- Many Jewish youth also take part in the Y.M.C.A. program. Occasionally men of Jewish background carry important committee responsibilities.
- Y.M.C.A.'s reach a large number of young men who are not connected with any church. Some are indifferent; others have never been touched by organized religion. These young people come to the Y.M.C.A. usually for social and recreational purposes which probably have for them little or no religious connotation.

²From *A Century with Youth*, Association Press, 1944, pp. 2-3.

³*History of Y.M.C.A.-Church Relations*, S. Wirt Wiley (New York, Association Press, 1944), \$1.50.

- In many other parts of the world the constituency of the Y.M.C.A. is made up largely of non-Protestants or non-Christians. The Christian character of the movement is by no means concealed, but Associations have sought to serve men and boys of all creeds without proselyting.

This inclusiveness of constituency equips Y.M.C.A.'s to become an outstanding influence for religious unity. Churchmen pay tribute to the Y.M.C.A. as a pioneer in interfaith activity as well as in developing the ecumenical movement.⁴ Even more important from the standpoint of program is the opportunity afforded by this inclusiveness to promote confidence and understanding among persons of varied religious and cultural backgrounds. In a day when anti-Semitism is rife and tensions within Christendom are widespread, one can scarcely overestimate the value of the experience of friendly interdenominational and interfaith contacts in Y.M.C.A. camps, clubs, committees, and other informal settings.

This inclusive character of the Y.M.C.A. constituency presents problems as well as opportunities. In a group where the members have widely varied religious backgrounds there is a strong tendency to keep quiet about religion or to reduce religion to the lowest common denominator. It requires more knowledge and skill than the average lay or professional leader in the Y.M.C.A. possesses to deal with religion in such a setting in a way that will be fair to the diverse points of view. Consequently, the incisiveness of the Christian evangelical emphasis tends to be lost. Probably this trend toward a more inclusive constituency in recent years is a major source of the confusion that exists in many quarters about the Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. programs. As more industrial workers come into active affiliation with the Y.M.C.A., this dilemma about religion is likely to be sharpened.

Yet many Christian leaders in the churches envy the opportunity of the Christian Association in its outreach to men and boys of different religious and social backgrounds. They deplore the "unintended exclusiveness" of the average Protestant

⁴*Ecumenical* means "catholic" or "universal." The word has come into wide use in recent years in reference to efforts to realize the essential unity of non-Roman Christianity.

church.⁵ Many of them look to the Y.M.C.A. as an important agent for interchurch unity and an experimental center for breaking down religious barriers and reaching the unchurched. As Mr. Wiley shows in his historical review, freedom from ecclesiastical control has enabled the Y.M.C.A. to attract the youth of an increasing circle of churches and to advance the spirit of unity among the churches. On the other hand, many Associations have taken little advantage of this potential resource of inclusiveness and would fall as truly as the churches under Dr. Coffin's criticism of being a one-class organization.

DIVERSIFIED ACTIVITY PROGRAM

Many persons who do not know the Y.M.C.A. well are puzzled by the diversity of its activities. To some it gives the appearance of an athletic club; to others, an inexpensive rooming-place, or a recreational center for youth, or a health service for business men, or a night school, or a series of organized clubs for high-school boys. To some observers this does not look like a religious organization.

But the answer is clear to those who see the Association Movement in larger perspective. Although the chief object of George Williams and his associates was "to improve the spiritual condition of young men," from the beginning they realized the need of going out where young men are and ministering to their needs in practical ways. At first, the chief

⁵"The Church of today is pitifully hampered in her ministry of fellowship and justice because in so many places in her congregations are only folk of similar economic status and social outlook. Go through our church and one meets everywhere companies of people comfortably circumstanced, fairly educated and like-minded on social issues. . . . Differences in economic status or in social qualifications erect barricades. We are generally a one-class Church. It is rare to find in a congregation representatives of all the economic and social elements in the neighborhood. The result is that when industrial ill-will and strife arise, the Church is impotent to exercise a ministry of reconciliation. . . . No more imperative duty lies on ministers and congregations than to scan their constituencies, to ask themselves why the church they serve lacks appeal to groups in their communities, to humble themselves before God for social narrowness and to let the Spirit of Christ fill them with an evangelistic passion which shall overlap these walls of unintended exclusiveness." (Henry Sloane Coffin, President, Union Theological Seminary, New York City; from his address as retiring Moderator at the Annual Meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in U. S. A., Chicago, 1944.)

need seemed to be a reading room and a place where young men could gather informally under wholesome auspices in their few hours of leisure. Later, particularly in America, this need was expressed in terms of a gymnasium and a dormitory which could be a "home away from home." What impressed visitors to the London Association from other countries was "the combination of effective religious work with a humanitarian social-service emphasis upon a better environment for the underprivileged young man."

It is easy to see the dangers and limitations of this wide range of activities that is so characteristic of Y.M.C.A.'s. Leaders may get so preoccupied in promoting and directing these activities that they lose sight of the Christian purpose which first inspired the program. The Y.M.C.A. tends to become a large-scale business enterprise in which economic considerations outweigh religious convictions. In operating residence halls and cafeterias, as well as in carrying on recreational programs, Y.M.C.A.'s are tempted to follow the prevailing patterns of commercial establishments which make no pretense of being Christian. Theodore Roosevelt once said: "The thing I like about you Y.M.C.A. folks is the way you mix religion and common sense." But all too often the religious element is so diluted that the result is a very thin mixture.

On the other hand, few institutions of any kind have as wide a range of contacts as the Y.M.C.A., or touch life at so many vital points, or have so much opportunity to offer practical training in Christian living and appreciation. In comparison with most churches, Y.M.C.A.'s function seven days a week and touch people at the center of their vital interests. Their contact with youth and adults is at the point of informal and voluntary activity. They have less opportunity to give systematic instruction in Christian doctrine or to provide formal services of worship, but they offer a great laboratory for training in the actual practice of Christian living.

Moreover, those who determine policies through Y.M.C.A. boards and committees are faced with practical decisions where Christian principles and values are at stake. They cannot stop with discussion on economic and racial issues, for example, nor with pronouncements about what ought to be done; they have to consider how far to go in translating Christian ideals into operating practices. Decisions on specific ques-

tions of this kind usually have been so cautious that the term "pioneering" can seldom be applied, but no one can measure the latent power of the Y.M.C.A. in the community if laymen begin to see more clearly the social implications of their Christian commitment. One of the first interpreters of the origin of the Y.M.C.A. in London wrote that these men believed "the duty of the members should be to exert a Christian influence *in the sphere of their daily calling.*" The resources in Y.M.C.A. programs and relationships for expressing our Christian outlook in terms of day-by-day decisions and experiences are almost limitless.

EDUCATIONAL SKILL

There is one more characteristic of the Y.M.C.A. Movement that holds special significance for making the Christian emphasis effective in program. For fifty years at least this movement in the United States and Canada has produced leaders who have been in the forefront of educational thought and practice. At first their energy was directed toward more effective methods of Bible study in voluntary groups or better ways of training leaders for the Sunday School. Later they pioneered in techniques of camping and conducting boys' clubs. Methods of religious and vocational counseling were worked out in the Y.M.C.A. laboratory. In more recent years "Y" men took a leading part in progressive religious education, in leadership of group discussion, and in "group work."

Without religious motivation and Christian content this expertness in educational method will not make the Y.M.C.A.'s program distinctive in value. Stress upon educational processes without regard to the realistic view of human nature that goes with the Christian outlook on life leads to shallowness and unwarranted optimism. The educational and the evangelical emphasis should never be set over against each other. "Learning by doing" is too simple a formula for profound changes in personality.

Nevertheless, through good practice and effective program skills Y.M.C.A. leaders may make an important contribution to the total Christian mission for personal growth and social reconstruction. Here is another point at which Y.M.C.A.'s can supplement and strengthen the work of the church and the home—by helping to provide skilled and devoted leaders who

16 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

know how to relate religious objectives to the interests and needs of growing youth. Stimulating creative interaction among persons is one important way of achieving God's purposes.

Here, then, are five characteristics that help to define the "essential genius" of the Y.M.C.A. Movement during the first hundred years:

1. Evangelical motivation
2. Lay responsibility
3. Inclusive constituency
4. Diversified activity program
5. Educational skill

These dynamic factors suggest the direction in which Y.M.C.A. programs should develop if they are to retain their religious vitality. They supply a framework within which Associations can appraise the expressions of their Christian purpose. These five characteristics also provide the basis for blocking out the distinctive function of the Y.M.C.A.—in relation to churches, homes, schools, and other agencies—in a community-wide program of Christian education.

CHAPTER III

MARKS OF A SIGNIFICANT CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS

THIS CHAPTER might be entitled more popularly, "How to Know a Good Program When You See One." Occasionally prominent laymen call for more religion in the Y.M.C.A. program, but do not find it easy to state what specific elements ought to be included that are not now there. Secretaries at professional conferences invariably assert that the Christian purpose of Association work greatly needs to be strengthened, but they too are often vague about how to proceed. A local staff or committee that faces this question of Christian emphasis soon runs into difficulties of definition and interpretation.

The need here is not so much to define the term "religion," which all too quickly leads into abstractions, but *to locate those activities and relationships within the whole Y.M.C.A. program that are most significant for the realization of our Christian purposes.* Our problem is similar to that of the scientist who is trying to isolate a highly important but very pervasive element like radium, in order to learn more about its properties and its use.

Religion is related to all of life, we say; but just how and where is it manifested? Rarely now is there a member of the Y.M.C.A. staff with the title of Religious Work Secretary; every leader, it is said, is doing religious work. It was a great advance when spokesmen for true religion, ever since the time of the Hebrew prophets, insisted that God is concerned with the whole of life, that religion cannot be put in a corner or on a pedestal remote from any phase of daily living. But the prophets were very clear about God's purposes and very specific about his demands. Too often in our generation the slogan "Religion is life" has actually led to confused thinking and watered-down ethics. Many within the Y.M.C.A. will admit that our religious outlook on program has been blurred;

we are trying here to bring it into sharper focus. If we are successful, it should be easier for a local Committee on Christian Emphasis to select those elements in their complex program that deserve special attention.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Let us come to the heart of the matter at once by stating in simple terms what it means to be a Christian. We must look for elements in Christianity so basic that they are accepted as valid by the great majority of Christians, even though there be wide differences on forms and phrases. Difficult as this endeavor may seem, it is more fruitful than attempting to define what it means to be *religious*. Christianity is an objective historical movement; "religion" is a phenomenon that takes widely different forms—some primitive in moral standards, others deifying the State or the Volk. The words "religious" and "Christian" are too often used as if they were identical and interchangeable.⁶

1. Being a Christian involves sincere personal commitment to God as revealed supremely in Jesus of Nazareth and humble trust in the fulfillment of God's purposes in human history and in the lives of individuals.

2. Being a Christian involves a devotion to Jesus Christ, who through his teachings and his life and death made clear the nature and purpose of God and who lives on in Christian experience as a source of light and power.

3. Being a Christian involves a keen awareness of one's own shortcomings and of one's share of responsibility for the ills of the world, which saves one from self-righteousness and makes him slow to judge others and quick to forgive them.

4. Being a Christian involves a respect for every person one meets as of worth in the sight of God, a respect that leads one to be concerned about the welfare and growth of others. This regard for persons is not limited by color, nationality, or social status; it even includes enemies.

5. Being a Christian involves the attitude of a learner, a responsiveness to God's guidance, a constant seeking for the

⁶Much of what we say about Christianity is characteristic also of Judaism, because of the continuity in the Jewish and Christian traditions. However, if one sets down in similar terms what it means to be a Jew, he will note some important distinctions.

achievement of God's purposes for the individual and for the world.

6. Being a Christian involves a recognition that one is a member of a Christian community or fellowship, world-wide in scope and extending back through the centuries, expressed in tangible form in the Church. In this community of Christians one finds strength and guidance through worship and study and is expected to carry his share of responsibility.

7. Being a Christian involves a concern to extend the way of Christ to persons and areas of life that do not now accept his Gospel. It impels one to speak his convictions about God and man without fear and to be willing to suffer if necessary for the right.

Such a list of basic elements in Christianity is of course subject to refinement and modification, but it will serve at least as a starting-point for discussion of the Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program. These seven insights and experiences are clearly reflected in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere in the Gospels and the Book of Acts. They are not really seven separate items to be listed in order, but related phases of a total experience. They represent an outlook on life that may find expression in theological terms in a variety of ways. A recent effort within Association circles to re-state these affirmations of Christian faith, coming from the Student Divisions of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., is quoted in *Appendix A* for those who are ready for more detailed study in this area.

HOW PERSONS GROW

Our next step is to look at the types of experience that youth and adults have in Y.M.C.A.'s and to locate the points which are crucial for growth in Christian insight and living. Among all the contacts within the wide range of Association relationships and among all the forms of participation in Association activities, which are most significant from the standpoint of Christian emphasis?

Drawing upon our knowledge of how personality is formed in general, with no reference at the moment to distinctively Christian elements, we can state with confidence that growth takes place at these strategic points:

20 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

- Where persons are forming *friendships*: in gangs or clubs, in boy-girl relationships or "pal"—"buddy" friendships, through working together on projects.
- Where persons feel the impact of *ideas*: in classroom or discussion group, in personal conference, at the theater, in the library.
- Where persons are called upon to make *decisions*: in regard to life work, education, marriage, enlistment; with reference to personal habits such as drinking; on committees or councils where policies are being formed.
- Where persons are carrying out *responsibilities*: in classroom or group leadership, on basketball floor, in organizing a financial campaign, in facing danger in the air or on the battlefield, in working for more adequate recreational facilities for the town.
- Where persons are having experiences of *spiritual renewal*:⁷ in private meditation or group worship, in listening to music, on occasions where achievement is recognized, in moments of deeper fellowship within the family or a circle of friends.

KEY POINTS FOR CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN THE Y.M.C.A.

A list like this is inevitably incomplete and some items in it overlap; but it represents another step toward getting down to brass tacks when we talk about opportunities for Christian education in the Y.M.C.A. Look now at these strategic experiences from the standpoint of phases of the Association program that may be utilized best for the growth of Christian personality. Another list soon takes form, indicating key points for Christian emphasis:

1. *Group experience*. Our concern here is for the quality of relationships that exist within small groups—clubs, teams, interest groups—where there is frequent opportunity for in-

⁷"Whatever elevates life, beautifies it with significance, makes its appreciation of nature keener, its happiness in art richer, its moral practices more wholesome, its social relationships more humane is spiritual. Whatever gives men creative joy in their work, redeems life from drudgery, and baptizes it with purposeful meaning is spiritual. Wherever men find in life not simply things that serve them but values which they serve, so that they are ennobled by devotion, purified by a real and inward worship of the Divine made concrete in an experience of goodness, truth, or beauty, they are winning spiritual life." (Harry Emerson Fosdick, *As I See Religion*, p. 82. Harper, 1932.)

formal contact and group decisions. The relation between the leader or adviser and the group is of crucial importance. Further analysis in a later chapter will show that there is a close correlation between good "group work" and the basic elements of Christianity outlined earlier. The fact that small groups of various kinds are at the heart of the Y.M.C.A.'s program, at least with younger boys and teen-age young people, makes this a point worthy of special attention.

2. *Personal contacts.* Here we focus upon those person-to-person relationships that abound in every Young Men's Christian Association. Respect for the individual, so central in the Christian outlook on life, has definite implications for the way each person is inducted into membership in the Association and for the guidance he receives in working out his schedule of activities. This is the point, too, where the evangelical motivation of the Y.M.C.A. leader has its best chance to function, not only in direct personal conferences about a member's life philosophy but in relation to the individual's daily conduct and attitudes. Even brief contacts at the desk with reference to ordinary services rendered by the Association may pave the way for more significant personal relationships.

3. *Challenges to thinking.* Most persons come to a Y.M.C.A. for recreation or for physical conditioning rather than for general education. Systematic Bible study and religious instruction have been delegated for the most part to the churches. Yet any Christian Association worthy of the name seeks to put *content* into its Christian emphasis. For one thing, this involves provision for stimulating discussions in clubs and forums regarding the implications of Christianity for personal living and social change. It calls also for some direct interpretation of the meaning of Christian faith, with due respect for differences of religious background. It may call for a re-examination of Y.M.C.A. religious services from the standpoint of prophetic challenge.

4. *Projects of service and action.* To provide a laboratory in which members may gain experience in making decisions and carrying out responsibilities is a major opportunity of the Y.M.C.A. One thinks immediately of club business meetings, of camp councils, of contests and exhibits. One thinks also of World Service projects, of Hi-Y model legislatures, of efforts to improve conditions in the community. If these plans and

activities are carried out with conscious regard to Christian values, they become channels for the concrete expression of personal commitment and social concern.

5. *Periods of meditation and worship.* Many will think of religious services as the most obvious point for Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program. A recent survey, reported in a later chapter, shows that inspirational meetings and periods for worship are very common in Y.M.C.A.'s, particularly at certain seasons of the year. Under favorable circumstances such programs may be of central significance for gaining new insight and experiencing spiritual renewal. But such results are not likely to occur unless worship is planned with care and closely related to the individual's daily experience. We must take into account also the provision that is made for devotional guides and other types of literature on religion; for the time spent alone in reading and meditation may be of primary import for personal growth.

6. *Interpretation of Y.M.C.A. Membership.* To have a sense of belonging to a movement with a great tradition and a great mission for the world may be a powerful stimulus for youth. We have learned this to our sorrow in dealing with Fascism and other anti-Christian forces. The World Christian Community—the Church Universal—is a functioning movement of tremendous power for those who recognize their place in it. Young Men's Christian Associations around the world are a part of this inclusive fellowship of those who are bound together in loyalty to Jesus Christ. Our problem of Christian emphasis to a considerable degree consists in finding ways of interpreting an individual's experience in Y.M.C.A. clubs and activities in terms of membership in this larger Christian community. The recent trend toward defining membership on the basis of purpose and responsibility, rather than the mere use of privileges, is bound to make our Christian emphasis more effective. The problem is partly one of drawing persons from the marginal fringe of participation into the inner circle of Christian fellowship. It also involves a clearer recognition of the relation between the Y.M.C.A. and the churches with a definite goal of winning youth for active, meaningful church membership. Even more difficult than this kind of interpretation is the requirement that the Y.M.C.A. shall demonstrate in its own corporate life the reality of the Christian com-

munity. What will it profit to talk about "fellowship" unless there is a corresponding effort to develop a truly Christian association of young men? Such a goal makes heavy demands upon the board of directors and policy-forming committees of the Y.M.C.A.

HOW TO JUDGE THE CHRISTIAN QUALITY OF AN ASSOCIATION PROGRAM

We are now ready to draw conclusions regarding the problem with which this chapter began: to locate those activities and relationships within the whole Y.M.C.A. program that are most significant for the realization of our Christian purposes. On the basis of the "key points" outlined above we can formulate six major questions as a guide to appraising the quality of any Association program from the standpoint of a Christian emphasis:

1. Does the Y.M.C.A. foster the kind of *experience in small groups* which develops relationships that are Christian in quality?

2. Are the *personal contacts* within the Y.M.C.A., among members and with leaders, characterized by a sincere effort to stimulate individuals to growth in Christian insight, attitudes, and commitment?

3. Does the Y.M.C.A. sponsor programs both for regular groups and special occasions that lead individuals to a more *fundamental understanding of the Christian outlook on life* and that *challenge serious thinking* on social issues where Christian values are at stake?

4. Does the Y.M.C.A. encourage *projects of service and action* that give members experience in making decisions and carrying responsibilities in accordance with Christian principles?

5. Are opportunities for *personal meditation and group worship* provided by the Y.M.C.A. in such a way that they touch life deeply and lead to spiritual renewal?

6. Does *membership in the Y.M.C.A.* lead persons to a growing appreciation of the world-wide Christian community, as well as of local churches, and to active participation in this Christian Movement?

STANDARDS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SIGNIF

<i>Characteristics of the Y.M.C.A. with Respect to Religion</i>	<i>What it Means to be a Christian</i>
1. Evangelical motivation	1. Sincere personal commitment to God and humble trust in the fulfillment of his purposes in human history and in the lives of individuals.
2. Lay responsibility	2. Devotion to Jesus Christ, who made clear the nature and purpose of God and lives on as a source of light and power.
3. Inclusive constituency	3. Keen awareness of shortcomings, saving one from self-righteousness and making him slow to judge and quick to forgive.
4. Diversified activity program	4. Respect for every person as of worth in the sight of God, leading to concern about the welfare and growth of others—not limited by color, nationality, social status.
5. Educational skill	5. Attitude of a learner, a responsiveness to God's guidance, a constant seeking for the achievement of God's purposes.
	6. Recognition of membership in a Christian community, world-wide and century-old, expressed in tangible form in the Church.
	7. A concern for persons and areas of life that do not now accept the Gospel of Christ, impelling one to speak convictions without fear and to be willing to suffer for the right.

ICANT CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

<i>Strategic Points for Personal Growth</i>	<i>Tests of the Christian Quality of Y.M.C.A. Program</i>
1. Where persons are forming <i>friendships</i>	1. Does the Y.M.C.A. foster the kind of <i>experience in small groups</i> which develops relationships that are Christian in quality?
2. Where persons feel the impact of <i>ideas</i>	2. Are the <i>personal contacts</i> within the Y.M.C.A., among members and with leaders, characterized by a sincere effort to stimulate individuals to growth in Christian insight, attitudes and commitment?
3. Where persons are called upon to make <i>decisions</i>	3. Does the Y.M.C.A. sponsor programs both for regular groups and special occasions that lead individuals to a <i>more fundamental understanding of the Christian outlook on life</i> and that <i>challenge serious thinking</i> on social issues where Christian values are at stake?
4. Where persons are carrying out <i>responsibilities</i>	4. Does the Y.M.C.A. encourage <i>projects of service and action</i> that give members experience in making decisions and carrying responsibilities in accordance with Christian principles?
5. Where persons are having experiences of <i>spiritual renewal</i>	5. Are opportunities for <i>personal meditation and group worship</i> provided by the Y.M.C.A. in such a way that they touch life deeply and lead to spiritual renewal?
	6. Does <i>membership in the Y.M.C.A.</i> lead persons to a growing appreciation of the world-wide Christian community, as well as of local churches, and to active participation in this Christian Movement?

26 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

Such a series of questions has a cutting edge, however, only when content is put into the word "Christian" along the lines indicated earlier in this chapter. The validity of these criteria for evaluating a Y.M.C.A. program can be tested by checking them against the distinctive characteristics of the Y.M.C.A. Movement sketched in Chapter II. It may be of help to a local committee to see all of these factors in relationship as spread out in parallel columns on one page.⁸

Two general observations need to be made about this approach. One is to recall an earlier statement that our Christian emphasis in the Y.M.C.A. cannot be restricted to aspects of the program that are specifically labelled "religious." We are insisting that *the Christian emphasis in an Association must be inclusive without being indefinite.* Our Christian purpose is to be expressed in the Y.M.C.A. in two ways that supplement each other:⁹

- A. *In specific activities that are commonly associated with Christian living: Bible study, devotional periods, observance of special seasons like Christmas and Holy Week, church attendance, personal interviews on religion, and so on.*
- B. *In a quality that pervades all the activities and relationships sponsored by the Association.*

We may call one of these approaches *explicit* or *direct* and the other *implicit* or *indirect*, although in practice the two may be interwoven in a single activity. Any program that emphasizes either without the other is one-sided. No matter how well an individual or group is following Christian standards in practice, this experience will lack full religious significance unless on appropriate occasions the relation of this behavior to the Christian Movement is brought to consciousness. Likewise, unless the Christian convictions and ideals that are the subject of thought and prayer on special occasions are translated into action in relationships within the Y.M.C.A. and in the community, the "salt" loses its savor and the "light" becomes very dim. Part II will examine in greater

⁸See pp. 24-25.

⁹*Realizing the Christian Purposes of the Young Men's Christian Association*, a folder widely used by local Associations for appraising their programs, outlines these two major areas in some detail. See *Appendix B.*

detail ways of making both the explicit and the implicit aspects of the Association's Christian emphasis more effective. The relation between this analysis of the Y.M.C.A.'s approach to religion and other criteria that are widely used in Association conferences and staff meetings is pointed out in *Appendix C*.

In this connection it is important to sound a note of caution in talking about "religious activities." Strictly speaking, *only persons, not activities, are religious.*¹⁰ The same activity may mean different things to different people. A social occasion that is pure recreation to one person may be seen consciously as an experience of Christian fellowship by another. Sitting in a Sunday School class or a Y.M.C.A. clubroom where the Bible is being studied may be far from a religious experience to some of the boys in the group who are inattentive or mischievous. On the other hand, some activities are much more directly associated with religion than others; they are valuable in that they give one the opportunity to learn more *about* religion or to give expression *to* his religious aspirations. The emphasis throughout this book is on *religious experiences—insights, attitudes, relationships*. The skill of the Y.M.C.A. leader consists in providing a variety of activities, all of which are in harmony with Christian standards and values, and then setting the stage so that persons who engage in these activities may frequently have genuine, growth-producing religious experiences.

Our final observation relates to the timeliness of these proposals for Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A.'s. The program elements upon which attention is to be focused should be significant not only from the standpoint of Christian tradition and practical operation but in light of current pressing needs of wartime and the postwar period. What resources has Christianity to offer for needs like these?

- To recover firm standards of honor and kindness in personal living, when war seems to have put a premium on laxity in morals and destruction of life.
- To retain faith in God and his purposes for the world in face of the partial defeat of Christian aspirations for a just and durable peace.

¹⁰This point is well made in an important article by J. Edward Sproul, "The Religious Aspects of the Association Programme," *World's Youth*, Autumn 1938, pp. 448-457.

28 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

- To achieve a spirit of forgiveness and a desire for reconciliation, when so many have been cruelly wronged and the power to crush is in the hands of the victors.
- To reduce growing racial tensions by practical adjustments in our interracial patterns and by humble repentance on the part of the white man for his racial arrogance.
- To exercise the courage and skill that are called for if appropriate changes in social institutions are to be made in our own country.
- To strengthen the World Christian Community as a demonstration of the true nature of Christian fellowship and a leaven for the achievement of world order.

Only if those who direct Y.M.C.A. programs keep in mind crucial spiritual needs of this kind will they have *a sense of urgency* that will enable our Young Men's Christian Associations to make the contributions for which under God they have been prepared during these first hundred years.

PART TWO

A REVIEW OF CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN CURRENT Y.M.C.A. PROGRAMS

**(Numbers in parentheses refer to local Y.M.C.A.'s
as identified in the *Index of Associations Referred
to in the Text*, pp. 145-146.)**

CHAPTER IV

BOYS' CLUBS AND OTHER ORGANIZED GROUPS

AS WE PROCEED to examine Y.M.C.A. programs in more detail, it is appropriate that we should begin with a type of program that looms very large in the total volume of Y.M.C.A. activity and affords a particularly fertile field for Christian emphasis in light of the standards developed in Part I. We refer to the organized groups or clubs that operate under Association auspices, particularly groups of boys who meet in the "Y" building or in neighborhood outposts.

The point of view from which these organized groups need to be studied, locally or nationally, is well stated in a paragraph from the report of one of the branches of the Detroit Y.M.C.A. (1):

We feel that the most important aspect of our work is to create a Christian spirit and atmosphere in everything we do, so that boys and men as they come into our building or come under our influence will feel the reality and power of the Christian life. We therefore feel that before thinking of religious emphasis as so many activities we should think of it as a spirit to be expressed in all relationships and should seek to get our members to express that spirit in their daily lives. . . . Our clubs, therefore, should increasingly become little democratic fellowships to develop character, personality, respect, cooperation, and sharing the Christian way of life. Each group or club should develop its own purpose and work out its program in harmony with this purpose. All too few clubs do this at present. They should also discuss and act upon current problems on their own age level in the light of Christian living.

BOYS' CLUBS

No group within the lay and professional leadership of the Y.M.C.A. has given more attention to Christian emphasis than those who work with boys. For at least twenty years within Association circles the group life of boys has been an

object of special study and experiment. Research has corroborated the observation that the formation of character and the integration of personality are dependent to a large extent upon the kind of small, cohesive, "natural" groups to which a growing boy belongs.¹¹

The Sixth North American Assembly of Workers with Boys in 1941 devoted major platform time to addresses on Christian emphasis. The ten types of "basic experiences in religious growth" presented there by Professor Ernest J. Chave made a strong appeal. At the next assembly in 1944 one of the commissions made a careful restatement of the Y.M.C.A.'s Christian purpose in work with boys.¹²

Yet there is imperative need, according to Harrison S. Elliott, to become still more specific concerning our Christian emphasis in work with Y.M.C.A. boys' groups:

Creative group work is not automatically Christian group work. . . . Boys need to be enlisted in developing groups which in spirit and practice are Christian. They need to be helped in discovering what is Christian in various aspects of their lives and in making Christian decisions. They need to learn how to utilize the Bible as an aid in their decisions, and prayer and worship as a resource in their lives. We have a unique obligation and opportunity as a Christian organization to develop distinctively Christian group work.¹³

To meet this need fully would require extended collaboration and much more space than is available here, but we shall at least make a brief analysis of group experience, with an eye not only to good group-work principles but to Christian concepts and standards. Committeemen and staff members who are intent upon "developing groups which in spirit and practice are Christian" may find the following criteria and illustrations from reports of local Associations an aid in strengthening their own program with organized groups.

Group Experience of Christian Quality. Let us raise our

¹¹See two articles by Hedley S. Dimock on research as related to boy life. *Centennial Fronts for Y.M.C.A. Boys' Work*, pp. 16-23 (New York, Association Press, 1941), \$1.50.

¹²*Appendix C*, pp. 135-136.

¹³*Centennial Advances for Y.M.C.A. Work with Boys*. Report of the Seventh North American Assembly of Workers with Boys. (New York, Association Press, 1944.) \$.75.

questions in relation to the actual operation of a boys' group.

1. "Statement of purpose." What do the boys in the group conceive their purpose to be? Is this purpose in harmony with our concern for the development of Christian personality and the building of a better society?

"The specific purposes of the group should be clearly stated and should guide leaders and members in all their activities."¹⁴

"One essential of any true purpose or statement of objectives is that it 'belongs' to the group which subscribes to it. Far better a limited purpose which the members feel to be their own than an elaborate and comprehensive one which they merely feel expected to adopt."¹⁵

Principles like these, although valid, present the problem of leading a group on from a very elementary concept of purpose—perhaps only "to have fun"—to one that is clearly Christian in its outlook.

Reference will be made later to rituals and other means of developing a keen awareness of the purpose of the group. Clubs that belong to a national movement within the Y.M.C.A. begin with an official statement of purpose; the problem here is to have a local group accept the national purpose with full meaning.

2. "Relationships within the group." Do members of the group experience satisfaction in being together? Do they have common interests and bonds of friendship that give them unity in spite of occasional differences? Does every individual have a sense of "belonging" and is he recognized by others as having something to contribute to the group?

Group workers put a premium on the kind of interpersonal relationships in a small group that give its members a sense of personal security and help them to become well-adjusted socially. From the Christian standpoint these relationships are significant also as an experience of genuine "fellowship"—a word much used in Y.M.C.A. circles, sometimes without appreciation of its deeper significance. In the give and take of discussion and personal contact, for example, one may learn

¹⁴From a report on program evaluation by the Religious Education Committee of the Central Y.M.C.A., Baltimore.

¹⁵Memorandum on "Religious and Spiritual Emphasis in the Program," Springfield (Mass.) Y.M.C.A.

"not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." Experiences of rich enjoyment around a campfire or of great sorrow in the face of illness or death will help these relationships among members to become more meaningful.

3. "Procedure in planning." Are members of the group given as much opportunity for making decisions and carrying responsibility as they are capable of exercising at their stage of development? Does the adult adviser guide without dominating?

In good group-work procedure it is essential that there be a more experienced person who serves as an adviser in helping the group arrive at decisions, in addition to anything else he may do as an instructor or director of activities. It is obviously also a Christian objective that persons should grow in their capacity to take responsibility. "In group planning, boys are allowed freedom of choice, but are guided to see contrasts and alternatives. . . . Club officers and as many members of groups as possible are given specific, publicly recognized responsibilities which require effort to be expended."¹⁶

4. "Program content." Does the program of the group stimulate individuals to widen the range of their interests, understandings, skills, and acquaintances?

The enrichment of a program to stimulate the growth of persons is an axiom of good educational procedure. Likewise in Christian youth work the goal has been a well-rounded development of personality, based upon the New Testament record that "Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man." Less frequently recognized is the need to expand the range of personal contacts, so that boys learn to know individuals of different cultural and racial backgrounds. One of the chief objections to a policy of exclusiveness on the part of a Y.M.C.A. club is that it keeps the members of the group themselves from growing in respect for others.

"Physical fitness and health habits are taught and interpreted as a means for finding life more meaningful and living more effectively."

"We mix boys of different religions and races in situations

¹⁶From "How to Emphasize the 'C' in Y.M.C.A. Group Work," by Richard D. Cooper. *Christian Citizenship for Group Leaders*, Vol. 20, No. 5.

in which the point of contact is high achievement to bring forth mutual admiration."¹⁷

5. "Wider social relationships." Is the group aware that it is part of a larger movement in which it has a share? Do members of the group feel a responsibility for maintaining high standards of performance and cooperation in relations with other groups? Do they express concern for improving social conditions in their community and in wider areas?

Group workers recognize the danger that a small, cohesive group may become self-centered and they give special attention to the development of social responsibility through club experience. How much more should this be a concern of the Christian group leader! Since Y.M.C.A. clubs are part of a national and world-wide movement, there is unusual opportunity here for extending the social consciousness of boys and developing a sense of the larger Christian community. Into the thinking of every "Y" group, including those that are organized largely around recreational interests, there must come also a growing awareness of community needs, a sensitiveness to social injustices, and some active participation in projects of service or social action appropriate to their age and experience.

"Parties, basket collections, and toy-repairing projects bring boys into direct contact with less privileged persons."

"Group discussions on social problems are encouraged and highly charged competition is being replaced by experiences in sharing strengths and weaknesses."¹⁸

Youth-and-government projects and similar undertakings of Hi-Y Clubs directed toward realistic training in Christian citizenship provide an outstanding opportunity for Christian emphasis in this area of wider social relationships.

6. "Recognition of Christian values." Does the group take time occasionally to think about the significance of what it is doing and to look critically at the outcomes of its activities? Does it learn to make these judgments on the basis of Christian values and convictions?

Evaluation is regarded by educators and group workers as

¹⁷Richard D. Cooper, *op. cit.*

¹⁸*Ibid.*

36 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

of primary importance in the growth of persons or groups. For religious leaders also it is of the highest importance, because it is in periods of reflection and worship that religious experience is brought to sharpest focus.

No matter how much preparation is expended, no matter how well the group experience is guided, there will be no achievement of religious values and purposes unless the religious values and purposes in an experience are recognized by the individual or the group. This is the challenge to be met by the counselor and supervisor. Hundreds of potential religious experiences have been lost because counselors or supervisors, seeing the value themselves, took it for granted that the boys also saw the value and did not make sure that the religious values and purposes in the experience were brought to the attention of those involved.¹⁹

Such recognition of Christian values in group experience does not imply moralizing, nor does it always require a lengthy period of sober reflection. A leader may express a note of appreciation in the midst of an activity or underline the thoughtful remark of a boy. Frequently the devotional period at the beginning or end of a club meeting may help members of the group to catch the larger significance of an enterprise or to bow in humility in recognition of shortcomings. At other times evaluation may take place as part of a business session where there is frank discussion of the results of a project or debate about standards to be followed in a program just getting underway.

Whatever form such recognition of Christian values may take, the importance of this sixth criterion can scarcely be exaggerated. Group experience in Y.M.C.A. boys' clubs cannot be Christian in quality if it does not meet the first five tests; but without this occasional conscious recognition of the significance of what is happening in terms of the Christian outlook on life, the Y.M.C.A. would have nothing distinctive to add to good group work that is being carried on without regard to religious considerations.

Sometimes a direct and dramatic approach to religion with boys is highly effective. In one of the Y.M.C.A.'s of St. Louis (2), a widely respected secretary has reached thousands of

¹⁹From a paper by Douglas Monahan of the Evanston (Illinois) Y.M.C.A., "Achieving Religious Values and Purposes Through the Boys' Work Program." Mimeographed.

less privileged boys over a period of fifteen years. When on the air not long ago in a *Vox Pop* broadcast, he was asked to what he attributed his success with boys. His reply was direct: "First we teach them to love Jesus and follow along his lines. That's the foundation of all work with youth. When you lead them to Christ, the rest is easy."

Programs Relating Specifically to Religion. This somewhat lengthy analysis of group experience from the standpoint of Christian values by no means carries any implication that direct instruction in religion and more formal services of worship are secondary in importance. The validity of both the implicit and the explicit aspects of Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program was established in the preceding chapter.²⁰ A large part of the remainder of this book will deal with those activities and experiences that are regarded as specifically "religious." It is quite likely that the time is at hand again in Y.M.C.A. circles to approach religion more directly.

Nevertheless it is essential, we repeat, for a worker with boys in the Y.M.C.A. to know what kind of group experience is to be regarded as Christian in spirit and practice. Unless our Christian emphasis permeates all aspects of our boys' program, including relations on the gym floor and the conduct of meetings, it will have little effect on the lives of growing youth. It is equally true that, if the Christian spirit is made to function in a boy's ordinary club experience, the specific references to Christianity to which we are about to turn attention will have far more meaning.

One suspects that the following judgment about the devotional period of a club meeting is correct in all too many instances:

Too often the worship period is stuck on the club agenda like a sore thumb, put there because the club counselor or supervisor thinks it should be a part of the program. There is no attempt to make it a vital and interesting program item, that boys desire and help to plan.²¹

This is not the whole story, however. Many workers with boys, including the writer of the paragraph just quoted, are seeking to make prayer and worship meaningful to boys and

²⁰See p. 26.

²¹Douglas Monahan, *op. cit.*

are compiling source materials for the enrichment of the devotional period.

I have come to the realization that the club worship period must be a co-operative, counselor-boy experience and that although poems and so on have their place, the vital devotional period is the one that rises from the experiences of the club members.²²

This writer gives an illustration of putting aside a planned devotional service when a discussion arose that provided an excellent basis for a brief period of worship. He shows how these occasional discussions that get beneath the surface, perhaps on a hike or before a meeting, may be used by boys themselves to plan services of worship that are packed with religious value.

A special inquiry in the winter of 1944 reveals some illuminating facts about devotional periods in Y.M.C.A. boys' clubs. One hundred and forty Associations replied to the question: "How often is prayer or some other specifically religious expression included as a part of group programs in your Y.M.C.A.? What is your estimate of the effectiveness of this practice?" Of the Hi-Y clubs eighty per cent were reported to include such specifically religious elements regularly in their programs; for other boys' clubs the proportion was sixty per cent. In rating the effectiveness of this practice very few observers said it was "purely a form," but only thirty per cent rated the practice "very significant." In the great majority of cases the judgment was "occasionally effective," indicating that leaders are aware of the problem involved in raising group devotions in Y.M.C.A. boys' clubs to a high level. One secretary raises the pertinent question, however: "Would not this same percentage be true of prayer in church?"

In many of these Y.M.C.A. clubs the religious background of the boys varies greatly. What effect does this have upon the specifically religious features of a club program? In the inquiry referred to above, the question was asked: "When Catholics and Jews are present in Y.M.C.A. groups how do you handle the devotional period? Have you experienced any difficulty or any opposition to devotional elements with mixed groups of this kind?" Comparatively few of those who replied were

²²*Ibid.*

conscious of any great difficulty at this point. In most instances the Christian purpose of the Association is frankly stated and commonly accepted by those who participate. It will be illuminating, however, to quote a number of comments:

"Ignore it. . . . This problem is one which is usually exaggerated out of all proportion by the adult prejudices of the leader."

"The Catholic boys seemed eager and better prepared than others (to participate in Leaders' Corps devotions)."

"Two of our five Hi-Y presidents are Catholic. . . . We have had many conversations on the unity of the various faiths in the great fundamentals."

"We do have to be a bit careful. . . . The opposition comes more from the parents than it does from the boys."

"The general Christian emphasis seems apparently too insignificant for any concern."

"Lines are strictly drawn between Catholics and Protestants in our section and each group is quite self-conscious. Boys don't want to talk about it in the group because they feel it is 'dynamite.'"

"The presence of large numbers of non-Protestants in our membership tends to make us shy away from dealing with religious questions. However, I think this is a mistake and that it might be better if we were more forthright in raising religious issues with boys—not in any proselyting manner but in a way that assumes that religion is a vital ongoing interest of life which deserves the most penetrating thought and discussion we can give to it."

The use of rituals deserves a special note. For years it has been a common practice among Hi-Y Clubs to hold formal ceremonies for the induction of new members, the recognition of new clubs and the installation of officers. Many clubs also use a simple ritual to open or close their meetings. A useful compilation of rituals used in different parts of the country has been printed.²³ The point of view regarding the use of rituals is clearly stated in this manual:

The purpose of the ritual is to solemnize, dignify, and crystallize an experience of a club member. The important element in

²³*Hi-Y Rituals*, Association Press, 1942. 20 cents.

the ceremony is this experience at the heart of it—never its form. Unless it provides a significant experience, a ritual has no meaning. . . . No ritual copied from a manual or another club's program can have the personal meaning of one created by a group of boys working together. The samples of rituals set forth here should serve as patterns and helps in the building of a club's ritual. . . . In order to avoid the danger of having a ritual become stereotyped, clubs would do well to re-examine the ritual once a year and to introduce such changes as will make it increasingly meaningful.

Gra-Y Clubs and other standard groupings of boys within the Y.M.C.A. have also developed their rituals and devotional guides. Following is a list of source materials that have been found particularly useful by leaders of organized boys' groups.²⁴

FOR YOUNGER BOYS (10-14) :

On the Beam. Compiled by a committee of the Toronto Y.M.C.A. 50 cents. Prayers and Bible passages with brief inspirational stories.

Ford, Charles E. *Home on the Range.* Pennsylvania State Y.M.C.A. 35 cents. A Gra-Y book of worship for club and camp.

Bays, Alice A. *Worship Programs for Intermediates.* Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1942. \$1.75. Thirty completely planned services for the junior high school age.

FOR HIGH SCHOOL GROUPS AND OLDER:

Gilbert, Clark R. *Devotions for Youth.* Association Press, 1943. \$1.75. Contains more than a hundred stories and programs for young people. Written by an experienced Hi-Y adviser.

Informal Hi-Y Devotions. Compiled for North Central Area Council, C. S. Lamb, Editor. 50 cents. (Mimeographed.) A workbook including specific materials and suggestions.

Bays, Alice A. *Worship Programs and Stories* (1938) and *Worship Programs in the Fine Arts* (1940). Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$2.00 each. Widely used services for young people.

Cavert, Walter D. *Remember Now.* Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1944. \$1.00. Daily devotional readings for young people.

Page, Kirby. *Living Abundantly.* Farrar and Rinehart, 1944. \$2.50. A study of creative pioneer groups through twenty-seven centuries. The latest in a series of valuable compilations of devotional readings.

Fosdick, Harry E. *The Manhood of the Master* (1913), *The Meaning of Prayer* (1915), *The Meaning of Faith* (1917), and *The Meaning of Service* (1920). Association Press. These older books

²⁴Most of these materials are equally valuable for boys' camps. See p. 42.

retain their value for youth as a basis for personal and group devotions.

Later chapters will include reference to a large number of *special religious projects* carried on by Hi-Y Clubs during Lent and certain festival occasions. We cite here two additional instances of unusually significant activities relating directly to religion:

The first project of a Boys' Speakers' Corps, organized in a suburban Association (3), was to prepare three-minute speeches on the subject, "What The 'Y' Has Meant to Me." The ministers of a number of churches gave permission for a boy speaker to make his presentation in the regular church service at an appropriate point. Boys usually addressed churches of denominations other than their own. Before the boys went out to speak, they gathered at a Sunday morning candlelight breakfast for a devotional service, in which one layman from each of the participating churches joined. Through the experience the boys came to feel that the church was recognizing them and that they were part of it.

Another Hi-Y Club (4) carried out a series of meetings on six consecutive weeks on the topic, "How We Got Our Churches." Each week a clergyman of a different denomination addressed the group on the tenets and characteristics of his church. The speakers included a Roman Catholic priest.

To what extent do boys themselves take part in planning these specifically religious activities? This question was dealt with at length by the Commission on Christian Emphasis at the 1941 Louisville Assembly.²⁵ The reports of special religious programs compiled by this commission gave the impression that most of these activities were initiated by the Y.M.C.A. secretary. Purposes were stated in terms like these: "to have boys share in a significant religious service"; "to promote spiritual interests among our youth." In relatively few instances was there any indication that the program grew out of any expressed interest of the boys.

In so far as this is a true picture, it is a serious failure to meet some of the criteria proposed earlier in this chapter. Whether or not a program expresses Christian values is a matter primarily of the boys' experience rather than of the content of the activity. Better a relatively few specifically re-

²⁵*Centennial Fronts, op. cit.*, pp. 95-97.

ligious projects, inherently related to the total program of the group and carefully planned and interpreted, than an imposing list of "religious activities."

Camping. Although camping merits a separate chapter, a brief comment is appropriate here because of the potential importance of religion in the group life of camp. Few enterprises sponsored by Y.M.C.A.'s provide as much opportunity for both direct and indirect Christian emphasis as the summer camp. Viewed from the standpoint of the growth of Christian personality, camping offers at least four distinctive advantages:

1. The camp setting is a controlled environment in which wise administration can provide a wealth of situations in which boys may help to make decisions, determine policies and carry responsibilities.

2. The intimacy of cabin life and of relationships with counselors provides unusual opportunity for group experience that is Christian in quality.

3. In the outdoors a boy is much more conscious of the beauty and order of nature than in man-made surroundings and it is relatively easy to cultivate a reverence for God and a mood of reflection.

4. In the continuous program of camp it is easier to include devotional periods and discussions of the Christian religion as a normal part of everyday experience.

As an example, we quote from the report of a counselor who was "chaplain" in the boys' camp of a New England Y.M.C.A. (5):

Morning Devotions: A short talk, four to eight minutes in length, on some Bible story or life situation. This took place before breakfast while boys were seated at the tables.

Cabin Vespers: A period after taps of reading from a devotional guide, followed by scripture, discussion and prayer. Older boys often carried on the vespers themselves in the absence of the counselor.

Formal Sunday Service: Open to all boys, but arrangements were made for Catholic boys to attend mass if they preferred.

Sunday Evening Vespers: Hymn sings, a short religious story, or a movie on some life situation, or lantern slides of a religious nature. A committee with representatives from different age

groups and from both Roman Catholic and Protestant groups assisted by suggesting changes and helping to carry on the program.

If Y.M.C.A. camping is to fulfill its essential genius, says L. K. Hall, its objectives will be stated clearly in Christian terms:

The ingenuity of directors and counselors will be exercised in the discovery of ways in which the everyday meanings of Christian character and Christian relationships will be implicitly practiced and explicitly known. This religious characteristic is not easy of achievement, but continuous effort toward it is part of the essential genius of Y.M.C.A. camping. Unless the Y.M.C.A. can achieve this religious emphasis to a degree that goes beyond what is true in other camps, then the "Y" need not go camping—why should it?²⁶

OLDER GROUPS

Group experience in Y.M.C.A.'s is not confined, of course, to boys' clubs. In normal times one will find a considerable number of organized groups for young men: Phalanx Fraternities, Y's Men's Clubs, Toastmasters' Clubs, sports clubs, and so on, including some co-ed clubs. Older men also frequently organize groups on an interest or fellowship basis. These older groups deserve careful study from the standpoint of Christian emphasis, but they are given very scant treatment here for two reasons: (1) Few reports are at hand from local groups to indicate how the Christian emphasis is actually worked out. Under war conditions such reports are seldom available. (2) To a large extent the treatment of young men's groups would parallel what has been said about boys' clubs. There would be important modifications in the group experience of young men and the content of the program would differ at some points, but the basic criteria developed earlier in this chapter could be applied. It is to be hoped that a special study of Christian emphasis in young men's groups will be undertaken at an early date.

One Association (6) reports the use of a ritual regularly at the close of the monthly Young Men's Dinner. In this in-

²⁶"Camping and Y.M.C.A. Objectives," *Centennial Fronts*, *op. cit.*, p. 104. See also in this Assembly document the report of the Commission on Y.M.C.A. Camping for Boys, pp. 107-123.

stance all young men in the Y.M.C.A. between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four are members of the George Williams Association. This young men's division holds monthly fellowship dinners and develops special programs, including religious emphasis. The brief ritual was worked out by the officers of the Association.

Student Associations provide an unusually good example of Christian emphasis in older groups. Only a few illustrations from these Associations are included in this book, but well-developed program guides are available for those who are working in this field.²⁷ It is typical of a Student Christian Association to have a cabinet that becomes a relatively small fellowship group for worship and planning. Personal religion and social concern are usually inseparably related.

Worthy of special study also in this connection is the physical education group when properly organized:

The physical education program through its groups, committees, classes, councils, teams and clubs, offers unusual opportunities for the creation of small Christian societies. This is one way of motivating our Y.M.C.A. members, who are also members of political, economic, family, and social groups, to build a larger total Christian society.²⁸

²⁷Fern Babcock, *A New Program Book for Student Christian Associations*, 1943. Association Press. \$1.00.

J. Benj. Schmoker, *A Handbook for the Wartime Campus*, 1944. Association Press. \$1.00.

²⁸"Achieving the Religious Purposes of the Y.M.C.A. through Its Program of Physical Education," Chicago Y.M.C.A. report, 1939.

CHAPTER V

RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIVIDUALS

HOWEVER HIGHLY we may value organized groups in the Y.M.C.A. and their contribution to achieving our Christian goals for persons, we are well aware that this group experience constitutes only a fraction of our whole program. If one could count the number of personal contacts between "Y" leaders and boys or young men and the varied ways in which individuals participate in Y.M.C.A. activities or take advantage of services, the sum total would doubtless overshadow all other types of relationships.

It is not easy to deal precisely with Christian emphasis in these contacts with individuals. The term "work with individuals" as used in earlier days connoted a rather direct challenge to individuals to "give themselves to Christ." It was personal evangelism and many laymen and secretaries now of middle age or older can point to experiences of this kind that represented a turning point in their lives. Then along came a refinement of techniques and a change in philosophy that led to an emphasis on "counseling and guidance." In its more advanced stages this demands specialized skills that are beyond the reach of the average "Y" leader.

Our purpose in this chapter is to consider relationships with individuals within the Y.M.C.A. in more inclusive terms than either personal evangelism or counseling and guidance. We are thinking of a wide range of activities and contacts, all of which have significance to one who is alert to Christian values—contacts in locker room and lobby, relationships with men who live at the Y.M.C.A. for shorter or longer periods, membership and leadership experiences, and so on. We want to apply another one of the basic tests of the Christian quality of an Association program: are personal contacts within the Y.M.C.A. characterized by a sincere effort to stimulate in-

dividuals to growth in Christian insight, attitudes and commitment?

The two major approaches to religion as defined earlier²⁰—implicit and explicit—are pertinent here. The Christian emphasis in our relationships with individuals within the Y.M.C.A. is to be studied from two angles: (a) as it affects our attitudes toward persons in all kinds of situations; (b) as it relates directly to the individual's understanding and experience of religion. Instead of trying to distinguish these two aspects sharply, however, we shall take up one area of relationship after another and see where both types of Christian emphasis are involved.

PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES

When a leader in the Y.M.C.A. turns his attention to the wide range of organized activities for groups, large or small, he tends to think chiefly of the "subject-matter" of the activity—the games to be played, the instruction to be given, the organization to be set up. But a good leader sees beyond these activities to the individuals who are involved and their growth. When a leader thus focuses his attention on *the growth of persons through activities*, he opens wide the door for Christian emphasis. Any number of examples could be cited.

Here is an instructor in a Saturday morning gym-and-swim program for boys. He has learned to know the boys by name and has a card file with some basic information about each boy. He notes that a newcomer has such poor skills in basketball that he tends to stand on the side-lines and never to be chosen for a team. He takes him aside for a little personal instruction and introduces him to a group of boys whose playing ability is on a fairly low level. If the youngster's difficulty seems to be a general lack of physical co-ordination, he makes a mental note that this boy needs some special exercises. He resolves also to find out more about the boy's interests and background and to discover what he can do well. Over a period of months it is quite likely that this boy will gain rapidly both in physical skill and social adjustment.

A hostess at a teen-age recreational program seems on the surface to have a very minor part in the evening's program. But as she makes game equipment available or helps at the

²⁰See p. 26.

milk bar, she keeps her eyes open for one boy who is ill at ease and needs to be encouraged to enter into activities, or another who is unduly aggressive and needs a more constructive outlet for his energy. She does not always deal with these individuals directly, but in leaders' meetings she is able to suggest the kind of responsibility each should be given and to throw light on the personality problems involved.

A new Y.M.C.A. camp director inherits a rather conventional religious program that is planned and led almost entirely by adults. He gets a committee of boys together, explores their reactions to the religious services, helps them work out some programs more closely related to their experience, and soon has a few boys that are prepared to share in conducting services. Through their responsibility for planning programs of this kind, two of the most lively boys in the camp go back to their churches with much more respect for religion and look forward to the time when they can be camp counselors.

Specific illustrations of this kind, and many more vivid, can be given by every reader. One can think of leaders of this kind who have supervised swimming, directed dramatic productions, taught classes in the evening school, helped to plan vespers. He thinks of individuals who have been helped to overcome awkwardness, apathy, prejudice, or a bent toward trouble-making. The essentials for such a quality of relationships with persons are clear: a sensitiveness to the needs and characteristics of individuals, a genuine interest in helping these persons to grow, a willingness to take time for individual instruction or counseling, an ability to arouse new interests and to stimulate more serious thinking.

Such an approach to persons is indispensable if our Christian emphasis is to become effective in Y.M.C.A. activities. These attitudes and skills ought to be characteristic also of good teachers and social workers, whether or not they express their purposes in religious terms. This emphasis becomes distinctively Christian under certain circumstances:

1. The leader is conscious that such an approach to individuals is an expression of the Christian's respect for persons. Each individual, no matter how unpromising or troublesome, has God-given potentialities.

2. To the leader the Christian way of life is not a vague goal, only slightly above commonplace living; it calls for very specific attitudes and convictions that are often difficult to achieve: freedom from self-righteousness, an eagerness to learn, a wholesome regard for persons of different colors and cultures, devotion to an exceedingly high standard of personal living.³⁰

3. On appropriate occasions, the leader will share with the individual this Christian outlook on life and will help him mark out for himself certain goals for personal development.

CASUAL CONTACTS

Many personal relationships within the Y.M.C.A. are to all appearances random and occasional. Individuals wander in and out of the main lobby. Boys follow their own devices in the game room. Young men stop for a night or two on their way through the town; others take up a more permanent residence in the dormitory but do not attend organized activities regularly. A similar situation results when individuals take part in various programs of the "Y," but rarely see the general secretary or certain other members of the staff. Only on infrequent occasions are they likely to drop into his office.

Such contacts offer less opportunity for personal influence than is provided the leader of an organized group. But here, too, there are ways of making the most of these contacts as an expression of our Christian emphasis. The first requisite is that a leader shall not appear too busy or preoccupied. A youth may come in to the building with a problem on his mind, receptive to conversation. If the person at the desk is obviously busy with details and no one is in sight who seems approachable, the occasion for a friendly visit is lost. On the other hand, often one of the secretaries is placed at a desk within easy view and, although busy, can readily be engaged in conversation. If an executive is "protected" too carefully by his secretary, he loses many chances for fruitful chats that may lead to important relationships.

The person at the front desk is too often the least experienced member of the staff without any genius for personal

³⁰See pp. 18-19.

contacts. Business transactions can be carried on in such a way as either to dampen the spirits of a visitor or to warm his heart. A religious leader who frequently stops at a Y.M.C.A. on his travels for a massage reports that his impression of the "Y" tends to be formed by these brief but intimate contacts with one or two inconspicuous members of the staff. Personal attitudes and standards of behavior are quickly transmitted even in casual communication between persons. Some individuals have the knack of radiating friendliness and giving the impression that they can be approached readily by one who desires a further chance to talk.

The plane on which conversation is carried on in locker rooms, lobbies, and other places of informal meeting is a good clue to the quality of personal relationships in a Y.M.C.A. Profanity and off-color stories are out of place anywhere, but particularly in an Association that is trying to provide an environment congenial to the growth of Christian personality. Aside from this more obvious concern about language, however, it is important to be alert to the content of conversation for the sake of the interests and attitudes that are revealed. Boys who shy away from announced discussions on religious or social questions may express themselves freely in informal contacts. The skillful leader who overhears these conversations often catches a valuable "lead" for group discussion or work with individuals. The leading-on possibilities of casual personal contacts give untold significance to even the most humble position of leadership in the Y.M.C.A.

There are ways of "setting the stage" so that the relationships within Y.M.C.A. circles that seem casual and unorganized may contribute more effectively to personal growth. Some Associations give special attention to bulletin boards. Clippings, pictures and cartoons are carefully chosen to expand interest and provoke discussion. Items are changed frequently; apt titles are attached, often in question form. Many Y.M.C.A.'s post in the lobby a large newspaper conveying a clear picture of current events around the world. Others place in a prominent place a "thought for the day" or an inspirational message so that even he who runs may read.

Of special importance in this connection are the reading table and literature rack. In a day when light and cheap literature supplies the chief intellectual diet of so many per-

sons, Y.M.C.A.'s can perform an important service by providing an attractive display of substantial periodicals and pamphlets. Time consumed in selecting and arranging these materials for reading-rooms is well spent. The experience of U.S.O. Clubs in giving away literature on religious and social topics should cause civilian Y.M.C.A.'s to consider seriously the providing of inexpensive give-away literature as a regular practice. No one can estimate the amount of devotional reading and serious thinking in the quiet of one's room that may be stimulated through skillful distribution of literature.

Two-thirds of all the literature prepared by the Army and Navy Department of the Y.M.C.A. for men in the armed services has been directly religious in content: New Testaments, guides to personal devotions, interpretations of Christian faith. As of August 1, 1944, more than 4,440,000 copies of the religious literature had been distributed through U.S.O. Clubs and other agencies. In addition, about 1,500,000 overseas kits, containing items dealing largely with religion, had been distributed in co-operation with the Salvation Army.

The favorable experience of Y.M.C.A.'s with the Fellowship of Prayer booklets provides another illustration of effective use of religious literature with individuals. These devotional guides for the Lenten season, prepared under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches, are given to every dormitory resident by some Associations and made available in other ways. The extent of this practice may be judged by the fact that Association Press distributes some 50,000 of these booklets in a typical year.

Later chapters will illustrate additional ways of expanding interests and stirring up thought through music and other forms of art. The important point here is to see how all materials of this kind may enrich the casual personal contacts and relationships that abound in any thriving Y.M.C.A.

PLANNED INTERVIEWS

This entire chapter is concerned with counseling in its broadest sense. The process of personal guidance reaches its culmination usually, however, in the planned conference or interview. The essentials here are at least three: (1) a quiet place where two persons can talk in unhurried fashion without interruption; (2) an individual who feels the need of

help and comes—preferably voluntarily—to some one in whom he has confidence; (3) a counselor who combines a friendly personal attitude with knowledge of the fundamental principles of sound counseling.

Relatively few Y.M.C.A.'s thus far have added persons to their staff who would qualify as expert counselors or have a laboratory for vocational and educational tests. But many Associations are recognizing that counseling and guidance ought to have an important place in their program and that all staff members need to improve their skills in dealing with persons.³¹ A concern for doing the right thing for returning service men has stimulated activity in this field.

It is not appropriate here to deal at length with counseling skills. We are particularly interested in pointing out the religious implications of good guidance procedures. The next three paragraphs are drawn in substance from two pamphlets that have been circulated widely by the Army and Navy Department of the Y.M.C.A.'s in cooperation with the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ:³²

Good counseling is based upon the central values of the Christian religion. One of these bases is the value of the individual, an understanding of each person in terms of his unique needs. Another is the recognition of the importance of attitudes and motives, the "inner" side of personality: "Out of the heart come the issues of life." A third basis is an awareness of the stabilizing effect of a set of inner values. The individual's faith in God, in his fellowmen, and in the worth of his own activities will provide his best guide through emotional upheavals.

The counselor with a religious outlook realizes even more than others the need for dignity and genuineness in intimate relations. He gives himself as a friendly, understanding person. His activity at first is mainly listening, through which he may express his deep concern for another person. He seeks to help another to know himself and to help himself. Occasion-

³¹*Counseling*, a monthly publication of the Committee on Placement and Guidance, carries numerous reports on Y.M.C.A. developments in this field.

³²*The Ministry of Counseling* by Rollo May and *The Ministry of Listening* by Russell L. Dicks. Federal Council of Churches of Christ. 10¢ each.

ally in a crisis quick action on the part of the counselor is necessary; but this is only temporary and the aim is to help the individual ultimately carry responsibility for himself. "If we are to be of help to a person we must work with him in his own thinking rather than try to force our attitudes upon him." The counselor is concerned to cure and rehabilitate rather than to punish; Jesus' command, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," is of the essence of counseling.

Whether or not religious words are used, religious values underlie all counseling of this kind. Representatives of the church and kindred organizations, however, have a special opportunity to lead in prayer and call upon the resources of the Bible. Prayer and Bible study may have remarkably curative effect upon the individual, provided he is ready for their ministry and does not use them as an "aspirin" to avoid facing reality. Group worship can be a most effective sequel to counseling, bringing additional light and encouragement. The service of communion and other sacraments, conducted by an ordained minister, also may have profound influence in bringing a new sense of forgiveness and consecration.

To this valuable analysis we may add a comment on the importance of direct conversations about religion and the church. Occasionally a youth comes directly to a "Y" leader with questions that puzzle him about religious doctrine or practice. More often his confusion about religion crops out in a conversation on other topics. A secretary who for a number of years has carried on guidance "clinics" in public high schools reports that the proportion of questions directly relating to religion has increased significantly in the last year or two. The war experience has brought home the fact that a philosophy of death is an indispensable part of a philosophy of life. The Y.M.C.A. secretary deals with some young men who are not identified with any church and many others whose experience of religion within the church has not been satisfying. However diligently he may refer these individuals to a church in the community and to a particular clergyman, as a Christian layman he must share the responsibility for their religious growth. Sometimes what is needed is a clarification of ideas, and therefore the leader's own thinking about Christianity must be clear. Others need practical help in bringing the power and insight of the Christian religion to

bear on their own personal problems, and therefore the leader's own practice of Christian living needs to carry conviction. One who has experienced the reality of religion in his own life will have little difficulty in communicating his experience to others by word or deed. He will not press individuals to a decision unduly; he may have to wait for years before he sees some of his ideas and counsels bear fruit; but he never tires in his effort, by direct and indirect means, to help persons grow in their understanding of what it means to be a Christian and in their willingness to venture forward on the Christian way of life.

As men in uniform return to civilian life, much is being said in Y.M.C.A. circles about playing our part in helping them become re-established. All that has been said about participation in group activities and about random contacts applies to this important portion of our constituency, but Y.M.C.A.'s are in a particularly favorable position to serve these men through planned interviews. Gaining their confidence through friendly personal contact rather than official designation, Y.M.C.A. counselors can help these men make adjustment to changed conditions at home and at work. It has become clear that, while public and private social agencies will take care of physical and economic rehabilitation in large measure, the churches and Young Men's Christian Associations have a special obligation to meet the inner, spiritual needs of these men. To "restore the soul" is the crucial need of men whose spirits have been seared in the fires of war. It will take all the resourcefulness at our command to enter upon relationships with these men at points of practical interest and obvious need and to extend our services until we have touched their lives also at the deeper level of inner reorganization.

MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Membership experience has an important bearing upon Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program. For several years the Movement has been giving serious attention to membership policy. It is apparent that a large proportion of persons at present take part in Association activities and regard themselves as Y.M.C.A. members with little or no conscious commitment to the purpose of the Movement. As a report to the National Council in 1942 stated the situation,

54 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

The American Associations have not developed any uniformly acceptable method of distinguishing those who share their essential spirit and carry forward their tradition from those who move in and out of their fellowship or activities for shorter or longer periods.⁸³

Under these circumstances many join the Y.M.C.A. only for the sake of having access to certain facilities—a gymnasium, a social program, a room in the dormitory. They may have no sense of responsibility for planning and managing the enterprise. They often steer away quite successfully from any activities directly related to religion.

If the principles developed in the preceding pages to guide relationships with individuals within the Y.M.C.A. were followed, it would be impossible for any person to treat lightly the fact of membership. Leaders of group activities would encourage every participant to grow in interest and in willingness to take responsibility. Even casual contacts would contribute to a knowledge of the purposes of the Association. And surely there would be planned interviews for each member, both at the time of joining and periodically as he grows in membership experience. In fact, any Y.M.C.A. that takes seriously the recommendations of the 1942 National Council quoted below, will of necessity be involved in a rather extensive program of counseling:

Y.M.C.A.'s should provide each person, while a member of this Christian fellowship, with opportunities to grow in the membership experience beyond the level at which he enters. . . . Y.M.C.A.'s should develop new-member counseling projects as a means for aiding members and prospective members to appreciate the larger possibilities of the relationship.

Far more is involved here than institutional efficiency. One cannot be a Christian in isolation, as pointed out earlier.⁸⁴ Responsible participation in a fellowship of kindred spirits is an *essential* element of Christian experience. This awareness of belonging to a movement may be quite dim in the earlier stages, but unless an individual is growing from an outer fringe of mere activity to an inner circle of conscious, pur-

⁸³"Centennial Membership Policies," *National Council Bulletin Supplement*, January 15, 1943.

⁸⁴See p. 22.

pose-sharing membership, the Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program has failed to function for him.

Fortunately, many Associations are working hard at this problem of developing a more responsible and purposeful membership.³⁵ The Christian purpose of the Y.M.C.A. is being made more explicit in printed folders distributed to members. Meetings are being held at monthly intervals to induct new members more fully into their responsibilities. The boys' secretary in one Association (7), for example, gathers together all the boys who have joined within the preceding month, arranges a brief but impressive ceremony of interpreting the Y.M.C.A. emblem, and gives each boy a one-page statement to carry home entitled "Do You Know the Y.M.C.A.?" In addition to such meetings for youth and adult groups, an increasing number of Associations provide for a personal interview with each new member, through which the interests and needs of each individual are studied and guidance is given in selecting a program of activities. The physical examination, almost universally required of new members, sometimes is used as an occasion for interpretation of the Y.M.C.A.'s purpose to develop the whole personality.

Part of the experience of membership growth is the challenge to assume leadership. Some men can point to several decades of Y.M.C.A. membership, during which they have progressed from being an officer or a leader of a boys' club, through various committee responsibilities, to positions on the Board of Directors or other forms of advanced leadership. The genius of many Association secretaries consists in identifying boys or men with capacity for leadership and drawing them into increasing responsibility, often with a direct challenge to Christian commitment. A suitable public recognition of lay leadership often provides an opportunity to make clear both to the men themselves and those in attendance the larger significance of membership in this Christian Movement.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF ASSOCIATION POLICY

Important as is the area of Christian emphasis that has been under discussion in this chapter, it is difficult to report

³⁵For specific instances of varying approaches to membership definition and growth, see *In Wartime and After*. Proceedings of 48th Conference of the Association of Secretaries. Association Press, 1942, pp. 98-107.

56 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

in specific terms. Here and there an Association has formulated a comprehensive statement of policy and program that gives definite recognition to these relationships with individuals. An outstanding example is "A Framework for Religious Emphasis" developed by the Detroit Y.M.C.A. This set of standards for each division and department includes the following two sections:

I. GIVING GUIDANCE THROUGH PERSONAL CONTACTS

- (1) Should provide lay or secretarial counselors prepared to give counsel to individuals.
- (2) Should arrange schedule for personal interviews and publish prominently.
- (3) Should seek to push personal contacts back to fundamental Christian insights about God, society, personal responsibility.
- (4) Should make special provision for enlisting and coaching additional counselors.
- (5) Should arrange for professional consultation service for problem cases needing it.
- (6) Should make available an outline of daily devotional readings suitable for the several age groups.

II. INTERPRETING THE MEANING OF Y.M.C.A. MEMBERSHIP

- (1) Should arrange an introductory interpretative interview with each new member by a representative of the branch.
- (2) Should provide a health examination for each new member of Physical Department including an interpretation of the relation of the body, mind, spirit, to Christian growth and life usefulness.
- (3) Should use an induction ceremony for new members.

Included in a statement on religious emphasis prepared by another Association (8) is a proposal "that special consideration be given to those members who live in the Y.M.C.A. dormitory, in attempting to supply the atmosphere of a Christian home in their living relationships in the building and in attempting to relate them intimately to a nearby church of their denominational choice."

A chapter in a program manual for religious workers with students in uniform,³⁶ previously referred to, cites a number of illustrations of how personal and religious counseling is being done on the college campus. The secretary of one University Y.M.C.A. (9) reports that extensive plans are under way for an expanded university counseling and guidance program in the postwar period and that the Y.M.C.A. is seeking to define its function in relation to the total program.

As a result of this study of Christian emphasis in the whole range of relationships with individuals in the Y.M.C.A., the writer is convinced that one of our pressing needs is more adequate records of how a leader deals with individuals. The Association secretary is seldom a case worker or an expert in counseling, strictly speaking, but he is equipped to make detailed confidential reports occasionally of his experience in dealing with individuals in an endeavor to stimulate their growth in Christian insight and attitudes. Until records of this kind are available for careful study, our knowledge about the effectiveness of Y.M.C.A.'s in carrying out their Christian purpose with individuals will be necessarily vague and fragmentary.

³⁶B. J. Schmoker, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-122.

CHAPTER VI

STUDY GROUPS AND FORUMS

IF THE CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS in Y.M.C.A. programs is to make a lasting contribution to personal growth and social change, it must have content. Unless the inner experience of Christian commitment is undergirded by an ever-growing understanding of what it is means to be Christian, an individual is not equipped to face the conflicts and confusions of our day. We are dealing here with the third of our criteria for a Y.M.C.A. program of Christian quality: Does the Y.M.C.A. sponsor programs that lead individuals to a more fundamental understanding of the Christian outlook on life and that challenge serious thinking on social issues where Christian values are at stake?

There is some uncertainty today about the responsibility of the Young Men's Christian Association in this area. At certain periods in the history of this Movement, Y.M.C.A.'s were in the forefront of systematic Christian education. Every Association worthy of the name promoted Bible study and offered lectures on religion. The impression is widespread that serious study of this kind is now the exception rather than the rule. It is assumed in many quarters that the genius of the Y.M.C.A. lies in an activity program which provides for a functional expression of Christianity and that we must look primarily to the churches and the schools for instruction in religion. Before accepting these assumptions completely, it is wise to review what Associations are actually doing in this respect and to re-examine the types of study that may be appropriate to this lay Christian youth movement. We include here only those programs that involve a series of meetings and consist primarily of discussions or addresses rather than worship.

BOYS' BIBLE STUDY

Bible study is still a vital part of the program of many Y.M.C.A.'s. An outstanding illustration of this kind of study with younger boys comes from an Association in Pennsylvania (10) which has kept a careful record of its experience for the last nine years. For eight weeks during February and March Bible study is a major activity of the boys' clubs in this Association. On Friday night at seven o'clock the program begins with a brief devotional assembly. The boys then divide according to age (ranging from nine to fourteen years) into small classes led by young men who have received special training for this work. After forty-five minutes of study and discussion they gather again for a half-hour of moving pictures related to the topic of the evening. An extensive guide to study for the leaders is prepared each year by the boys' work secretary. The theme for 1944 was "Building a New World." Every fifth year the study is based upon the Old Testament. A home-study card is given to the boys each week. At the closing session the older boys are given an opportunity to make a written "decision" for Christian living. The enrollment in this project is usually well over 500 and the attendance averages as high as 85 per cent, indicating an enthusiastic response on the part of the boys.

A considerable number of Y.M.C.A.'s still carry on a systematic program of leadership education for boys who want to be leaders in physical activities. In 1943 registered Leaders' Clubs for boys totalled 169. One unit of this program each year is devoted to discussions centered around the Bible.

A Y.M.C.A. in Ohio (11) conducts two religious classes on Sunday mornings for boys who have no church affiliation. One is for boys of the downtown area and is jointly sponsored by a church in the neighborhood. The other is for children in a defense housing project and is planned with the cooperation of the project manager.

An extensive program of Bible study for high school youth is promoted on a state-wide basis in Pennsylvania, Georgia, New Hampshire, and other states. Each year a printed guide is prepared with ample material for eight weeks of discussion. This manual consists of pertinent questions and quotations around the theme for the year and includes suggestions for

Bible study. Rules for participation and the earning of certificates are laid down in detail. It is reported that the 1943 course, "Christian Youth Priorities for Victory," was studied of 50,000 high-school boys and girls. This program reaches many Hi-Y groups in smaller towns where there is no organized Y.M.C.A.

PROGRAM PATTERNS OF LONG STANDING

In our sampling of projects involving the study of religion by older groups under Y.M.C.A. auspices, it will be illuminating first to review the types of program that have continued for many years.

First on the list is the weekly adult Bible class. A Y.M.C.A. in Massachusetts (12) reports a Bible Study Club meeting Friday evenings that has been in existence for forty-eight years. Another Association in North Carolina (13) has a Bible Class, averaging forty in attendance, that goes back for forty-seven years. The International Sunday School lessons are taught one week in advance. A similar program is carried on by the Friday Noon Bible Class in a large Pennsylvania city (14). In this instance meetings are held every week in the year, the organization has been in existence for thirty-two years, and the average attendance is about sixty. Another Pennsylvania Association in a college town (15) has a weekly Bible Class of long standing, usually taught by a professor of religion. In one of the New York City Associations (16) a group of German ancestry—the Christlicher Verein Junger Männer—has been organized for seventeen years. After a fellowship supper each Friday night they study the Bible under the leadership of a skilled minister or professor.

A Sunday afternoon meeting of an inspirational and devotional nature was once the rule in city Y.M.C.A.'s. A few Associations still conduct a program of this kind with special music and a strictly religious message. For example, Sunday afternoon devotional meetings have been conducted by a Railroad Y.M.C.A. in Pennsylvania (17) for fourteen years. On the other hand, some Associations have adapted this program into a large mass meeting of a more popular type presenting lectures, travelogues and high-class music with an opening devotional service. Such is the Sunday afternoon series put on for a number of years by a Massachusetts

Y.M.C.A. (18) which sells season tickets and frequently fills the Civic Auditorium seating 2,500 people.

Noonday religious meetings in industrial plants were likewise a common feature of the Y.M.C.A. program years ago. This approach to industry is still found in some places, as indicated by the following report from an Association in a small city (19) that has been carrying on noonday religious meetings for twenty years at three or four local industries:

The service includes singing of familiar hymns, prayer and Gospel talk. We have a piano in each shop. Employees sing special numbers. The pianist is an employee. Local ministers give the addresses—practical Christian messages. These meetings are weekly from October 1st to May 1st. The management and employees think highly of them.

In some Y.M.C.A.'s a weekly meeting with strong religious emphasis has existed for many years, but has been expanded into a more varied program. For example, a large Eastern Association (20) reports a forty-three-year-old Tuesday Night Club program that includes a weekly dinner fellowship hour followed by special study projects. Sponsored by this club last year were a twenty-week study of "How We Got Our Bible" and a Spring Lecture Series on "The Christian Faith in Our Times." The latter was for a city-wide constituency and was conducted in cooperation with more than seventy churches and a number of other organizations.

Somewhat similar is the Friendship Club of a large New York City Railroad Association (21), which has rounded out forty-nine years of service. It is the direct outgrowth of group Bible study. It meets every Friday evening for dinner. After a brief period of fellowship and entertainment comes the Camp Fire Service, consisting of music and special speakers. Parallel to the latter is a Fishermen's Club, announced as "Bible study with evangelistic emphasis."

Outstanding in this connection is the "Y" Forum of a large Detroit Y.M.C.A. serving Negroes (22). This forum, sponsored by the Religious Emphasis Committee, is the present-day adaptation of a twenty-year-old tradition of Sunday afternoon meetings. Held from the first Sunday in January to Palm Sunday, this program "seeks to combine some of the spirit of the old evangelistic meetings with information in the

area of public affairs." In 1944 the series laid stress on post-war problems. Speakers included prominent white and Negro leaders from educational, industrial, and religious circles. Somewhat similar is a Sunday Afternoon Forum conducted by the colored Branch of an Ohio Association (23). Here the forums are sponsored by the Public Affairs Committee and are likely to center around social problems.

Unusual in its approach to systematic study is the Men's Club for the Study of Religion in Detroit, which meets regularly at the Downtown Y.M.C.A. Eighteen years ago (1926) there were lectures and luncheon talks in Detroit on almost every subject except religion. "Some of Detroit's business and professional men felt that there was a place for a mid-day club which would discuss matters of religion—a club which could include men of every faith." The guiding aim of the Men's Club for the Study of Religion was to serve as a "fellowship of the open mind." "It is a rallying ground for the man who wants to find out something about other religions as well as his own." The annual program of this club consists of two "semesters" of six or seven weeks each. The leader for the last six years has been Dr. W. P. Lemon, minister and student director at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Another program pattern of long standing is the series of weekly Lenten services conducted either by Y.M.C.A.'s alone or in cooperation with the churches of the city. Typical of the former are the following two programs:

In a County Association in California (24) Men's Noon-day Pre-Easter Bible Luncheons have been held for seventeen years. Local ministers share in the leadership but the program is planned by the Religious Work Committee of the Y.M.C.A.

For twenty-six years an Association in Pennsylvania (15) has been holding a brief winter series of noonday meetings called the Busy Men's Religious Hour. Outstanding ministers are brought in for this series. The attendance in 1944 averaged 200.

MORE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

It is difficult to draw a sharp line among Y.M.C.A. study projects that represent older and newer patterns. Several illustrations of current modifications of traditional programs have already been cited. Conversely, older patterns occasionally

crop up in a new setting. For example, in 1941 a thriving Bible Discussion Group with conservative outlook was established in the midst of one of the most modernized programs of a large city Association (25). This group grew out of an expressed desire of residents to study the Bible under trained leadership. During 1944 an instructor at the Moody Bible Institute has been the regular resource leader.

Granted exceptions like this, however, one can discover certain trends in more recent program developments related to the study of religion in Y.M.C.A.'s. One is the Sunday breakfast program that is now being held in a number of Associations. This gathering is designed primarily for dormitory residents and pays special attention to service men. Typical of this kind of program near troop concentrations is the Sunday Morning Fellowship of an Arizona Association (26). Up to a year or two ago a Men's Bible Class met in the lobby at nine-thirty. Now a period of fellowship and worship takes place at this hour, including coffee and doughnuts. About fifty men usually attend.

One of the Detroit branches (27) finds the following Sunday morning pattern most effective: The dormitory residents come down to a prepared breakfast at 9:00 A.M. They rotate responsibility for serving the meal and planning the program. Speakers are often selected from the membership. The program is largely inspirational in nature, with singing a prominent part.

Other Associations provide a somewhat more formal program, with an outside speaker every Sunday morning. Sloane House in New York City has a well-attended "Bible Breakfast" of this kind. Another Association in New York State (28) reports a twelve-week series of Dorm Sunday Breakfasts with a list of topics relating religion to current intellectual and social issues.

Mealtime continues to provide a good setting for study and discussion. For several years an Association in a suburban California city (29) has sponsored a Lenten Breakfast Forum Series for business men. These meetings continuing for five weeks, begin at 7:30 A.M. and in 1944 drew an average attendance of sixty-five. A theological professor lectured on "Faith for Living," drawing primarily from Old Testament sources. Another Y.M.C.A. (30) which conducts a discussion

group on current events regularly on Fridays varied its program last spring by introducing a five-week series built around the analysis and study of Harry Emerson Fosdick's *On Being a Real Person*. Unusual enthusiasm was developed by this combination of book review and discussion under skilled leadership.

The Friday Fellowship Supper of McBurney Branch, New York City Y.M.C.A., is regarded as the top-ranking religious program of this Association. Designed to bring all kinds of men together for fellowship and inspiration, this program has grown steadily since its beginning six years ago to a point where it occasionally reaches a capacity attendance of close to 100 persons. The topics include a variety of current social questions, but the whole program is conceived from the standpoint of Christian emphasis and religion is frequently the direct topic of discussion by outstanding speakers.

Occasionally, Associations have successfully adapted the Sunday forum technique to reach young people. One example is a Fellowship Forum for high-school boys and girls established by a New Jersey Y.M.C.A. (31) in the fall of 1943 "to afford young people an opportunity to discuss timely topics in the light of Christian teaching." This series of meetings was held weekly for four months. Another illustration is the High School Lyceum sponsored by a Y.M.C.A. and a Y.W.C.A. in Pittsburgh that serve a Negro constituency (32). This club, started ten years ago, is made up of boys and girls who come from ten different high schools. It meets bi-weekly on Sunday afternoons. The topics for discussion relate chiefly to current problems of social relationships as they affect young people. Among projects of a specifically religious nature are the singing of Christmas carols to people in housing projects in the district and an annual Easter sunrise service. Attendance runs between 100 and 150 young people.

Many forums and series of lectures on general topics sponsored by Y.M.C.A.'s might be included here, because the Christian purpose of the Association usually is kept in mind by the planners. But we shall limit our illustrations to several cases where the Christian emphasis is quite explicit. One is a Christian Living Forum conducted on four consecutive Thursday evenings by a New York State Y.M.C.A. (33) on the theme "The Church in the Postwar World." For the

first three weeks the speakers in turn were members of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish clergy. The final session was an interfaith panel by the same speakers.

The New York City Y.M.C.A. for two years experimented with a series of three lectures on religion in Town Hall by persons of national prominence. These meetings were planned with great care by young people from several branches of the "Y" with an equal number directly from the churches. They were designed primarily for persons between the ages of eighteen and thirty. The 1943 series drew a large attendance, in one instance going beyond the Town Hall seating capacity of 2,500. After each of these series a booklet was printed giving the complete text of the addresses and the ensuing discussion. The cost of this project was sizeable, but was supported by the Board of Directors as a major activity of the Association. The idea back of this kind of program is expressed by the program secretary of the New York City Y.M.C.A.: "I believe that in every city it is well worth while to devise some plan of saying dramatically and forcefully to the young people of the city, through the lips of persons to whom they will listen with respect, that religion is important and must be taken into account."

All too few in number are the forums sponsored by Y.M.C.A.'s dealing with problems of the Christian home. From an Association in North Carolina (34) comes a report of two successful projects of this kind last year. One was a panel discussion on "Building and Maintaining a Christian Home in Wartime." This was followed two months later by an Institute on "Parents and the Wartime Social Problems of Youth." Well-qualified leaders were brought to the city. An excellent book exhibit was a feature of the program. Both of these projects were sponsored by the Religious Program Committee of the Y.M.C.A.

Our last illustration of this kind is a Friday Noon Discussion Group that has been going on successfully in a Pennsylvania Y.M.C.A. (30) for twelve years. This is not labelled as a forum on religion, but the Christian emphasis is clearly indicated in the following interpretation by the general secretary:

It was understood that the discussion of the problems and issues would be from a Christian standpoint. It has been easy,

without dragging it in, to bring the religious emphasis and point of view as questions were considered and as the leader makes his summary in the closing minutes of each session. It has been observed that at least once a month the leader will speak from the viewpoint of a Christian in such a way that the members of the group naturally see that in the consideration of questions religion does have a place and a view. From time to time special speakers are brought in to center on some live issue of the religious field, such as "The Church and Politics."

Many Y.M.C.A.'s conduct adult education classes at certain periods of the year, but few reports are at hand of efforts to see the implications of a Christian emphasis for the classroom. How this is worked out in the Association just referred to is described as follows:

Early in the fall, before our informal adult educational program gets under way, a dinner meeting is held. This meeting is attended by the Educational Committee, the educational sponsors and the teachers. The sole aim of this meeting is to discover through open discussion ways of obtaining a Christian emphasis in each classroom. Each teacher states how he intends to incorporate into his subject-matter such items as will give his students a Christian outlook. The results of this meeting are Christian fellowship, an awareness of the fact that an educational class can be given a Christian emphasis irrespective of the subject-matter taught.

Occasionally, a Y.M.C.A. group supplements the discussion of religion by actual visitation. One large Ohio Association (35) for several years has conducted a series of meetings called "Adventures in Religious Understanding." Included in the eight-week program are visits to a synagogue, a Christian Science meeting-place, and other churches. The attendance at this series last year averaged 175. Another Association (36) reports that a small group of young men and women visited eight different churches, including a Negro church and a synagogue. This group meets for breakfast each Sunday and discusses their observations about the services.

Another illustration of an unusual character is a series of Inter-Service Club Spiritual Emphasis meetings initiated by a Pennsylvania Y.M.C.A. (37). Six service clubs joined with the Y.M.C.A. for the last two years in planning and promot-

ing a series of three meetings on "Spiritual Foundations in the Postwar World." The speakers were a rabbi, a Catholic priest, and a Protestant minister, all speaking on the same topic. During this three-week period all clubs gave up their regular meetings. The response has been so favorable that these joint meetings may become an annual institution.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

1. Direct Bible study and other forms of systematic study of religion thrive in Y.M.C.A.'s where at least a few leaders are convinced of their abiding value. Such conviction is by no means confined to those of conservative theological background. Wherever the study of religion is handled by competent leaders who not only know their materials but know how to relate religion vitally to human experience, the response is good, even though often limited to a small proportion of the constituency. If it is true that we are witnessing a revival of interest in "straight" study of religion, many Y.M.C.A.'s have the resources to join in this movement.

2. More direct study of religion is going on in Y.M.C.A.'s than is commonly recognized. This conclusion becomes even more apparent when one adds the review in Chapter VIII of study projects carried on in cooperation with churches. Granted that religious study of this kind is a small proportion of the total Y.M.C.A. program, in some sections of the country it retains an important place and continues to call forth a favorable response from the constituency.

3. Much of this study persists as a long-standing tradition among persons who would be regarded commonly as conservative in Biblical interpretation and theological outlook. This fact is a tribute to the inclusiveness of the Y.M.C.A. Movement. One must avoid generalizations about either the "fundamentalist" or the "modernist" character of the Y.M.C.A.; all shades of religious conviction are to be found here. Y.M.C.A.'s reflect fairly accurately the religious outlook of the community, particularly the Protestant segment of the community.

4. Most Y.M.C.A.'s have adapted their approach to a study of religion in ways that draw some young people and adults who have not been reached through more conventional methods. Such adaptations include the "problem" approach

to Bible study, the addition of other educational or recreational features, the development of forums, and so on. One secretary (38) writes: "The committee is considering for next year renaming the Bible Class, using some such title as Christian Forum, feeling that it may be made more attractive to the younger men of the community." Another Association (39) reports a religious "Information Please" program for adults, for which questions were sent in advance. Here and there an Association is using with boys the Bible "comics" that are now available.

5. There is special need to think through ways in which the Christian emphasis may be related more closely to forums and discussions on public affairs. Y.M.C.A.'s have a good opportunity to go beyond ordinary associations for adult education by generating a social concern that is religiously motivated. Occasionally, the subject-matter of these lectures and discussions may be directly religious, but whatever the subject there should be a definite effort to approach issues from the perspective of Christian values. It is good strategy and sound "doctrine" to keep Christian emphasis and public affairs education in Y.M.C.A.'s closely related locally as well as nationally.

6. Certain types of religious study are particularly appropriate to Y.M.C.A.'s: (a) Study that develops naturally as a part of the program of organized groups with an over-all Christian purpose. Often the discussions of religion that arise in such a setting have more meaning to young people than more formal instruction. Certainly such study reaches a considerable number who are not regular church attendants. (b) Study in Y.M.C.A.'s that is part of a co-operative approach to the community on the part of churches and other religious agencies. Every community has its groups that are unreached by the churches and its areas of life that are not receiving adequate attention. The religious study projects of any Association should be designed to meet real and well-recognized needs. (c) Study that promotes religious understanding. By their interdenominational and sometimes interfaith character Y.M.C.A.'s are well fitted to encourage an accurate knowledge of differing religious traditions and viewpoints, without sacrificing in any way the convictions of an individual. Well-conceived programs of this kind seem at present all too rare.

The indispensable claim upon Christians to be clear in their thinking and the role of Y.M.C.A.'s in furthering this aspect of the Christian enterprise were cogently stated several years ago by a member of the National Board staff:

The Young Men's Christian Association should be involved formatively in the current attempts to re-state the Christian position. Our organization should offer opportunities and encouragement for a large number of thoughtful Christians to engage in fresh personal and group search for, and commitment to, the central elements of Christian Faith. What is it that is revealed to us about God and his will in the person of Jesus Christ? How is this Christian truth related to the many-sided life of today—your life and mine and everybody else's, in our business, our families, as citizens of the State, as members of a national or racial community? What is the Church and what can it become? This is a task for intelligent laymen quite as much as for the clergy and the theologians.

We are not likely to be able to maintain the values for which Christianity stands (and which most good men accept) if we lose the Christian faith in God, in man himself, and in the possibility and necessity of the "redemption" of the best and worst of men. We must take our part in presenting this message to young people and younger adults and our purposes must be clear—to develop understanding and to win willing and convinced adherents.³⁷

A SELECTED LIST OF MATERIALS FOR STUDY OF RELIGION IN Y.M.C.A. GROUPS

For younger boys

Curtis, Muriel S., *The Story of the Bible People*. Macmillan, 1942. \$1.75. A guide to the study of Bible stories and Biblical history for children 10 to 14 years of age.

Junior-Hi Kit. Westminster Press, 1944. \$2.00. A complete year's program for junior high groups in churches, also adaptable to Y.M.C.A.'s.

For high-school groups

Bainton, Roland H., *The Church of Our Fathers*. Scribners, 1941. \$2.50. A fascinating study of essential points in Christian history.

Forerunner Studybooks: *Pattern for Peacemakers*, *New Wars for Old*, *Exit Empire*, *The Next Peace*, and others. Fellowship of Reconciliation, New York. 25¢ each. For high-school groups, dealing with the social concerns of Christians.

Harris, Paul, Jr., *News from North of the Nile*. Association Press, 1944. \$1.50. A journalistic approach to the great events and messages of Bible times.

³⁷J. Edward Sproul, *op. cit.*, pp. 450-451.

70 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

Harris, Paul, Jr., *Youth Can Count*. Association Press, 1943. 60¢. Contributions that Christian youth can make, today and tomorrow.

Leiper, Henry S., *Blind Spots*. Friendship Press, 1944. 60¢. How one may cure himself of race prejudice.

The Society Kit. Westminster Press, 1944. \$2.50. Programs and topics for young people in church or "Y" groups, including suggestions for discussion, worship and recreation.

United Christian Youth Movement publications: *Christian Youth and the Economic Problem* (20¢); *Christian Youth and Interfaith Cooperation* (20¢); and others.

For older youth and adults

Craig, Clarence T., *One God, One World*. Association Press, 1943. 75¢. An interpretation of the Biblical sources of our universal faith. (See also other volumes in the Pioneering Church Series.)

Eddy, Sherwood, *A Portrait of Jesus*. Association Press, 1943. \$1.00. "A twentieth century interpretation of Christ."

Hutchinson, Paul, *From Victory to Peace*. Willett & Clark, 1943. \$1.50. A study of international and domestic postwar problems from the perspective of the Christian Churches.

Richardson, Alan, *A Preface to Bible Study*. Westminster Press, 1944. \$1.00. An introduction to Bible study by an English scholar, for mature groups.

Shafer, Luman J., *The Christian Mission in Our Day*. Friendship Press, 1944. 60¢. Problems of world order, prepared for mission study groups and others. A study guide for young people based on this book: *Do You Want a Christian World?*, by Willis Lamott. 25¢.

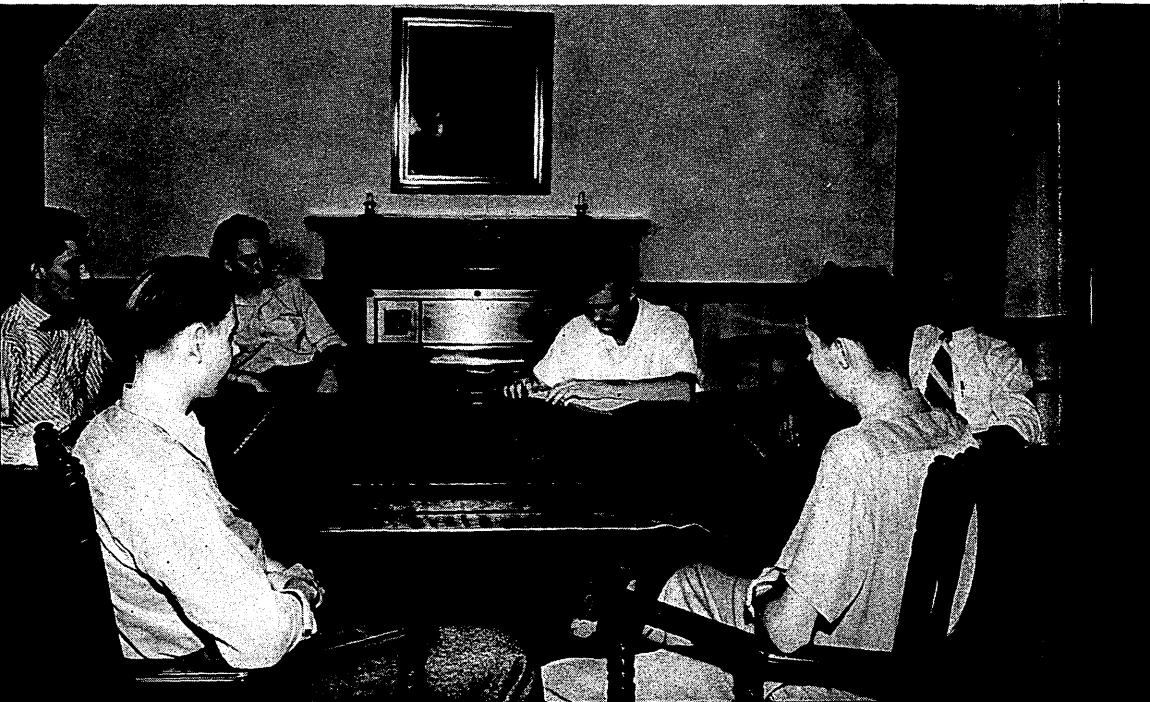


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tion with the churches as a community-wide enterprise, additional illustrations will be given in Chapter VIII. At this point we are focusing attention on the services for worship and inspiration carried on more directly under Association auspices.

One Association in Pennsylvania (40) has Fireside Vespers every Tuesday in Lent at 9:00 P.M. in the main reception room, conducted by pastors of the city. During Holy Week brief services are held every day at 12:30 and 9:00 P.M. Some of the latter are conducted by Y.M.C.A. laymen and secretaries. The folder announcing these services urges men to attend the churches of their choice.

The Holy Week program of another large city Association (41) consists of a lobby organ concert and hymn-sing each evening at eight-thirty, a chapel service at noon on Thursday, a Good Friday service for employees, and participation in the community sunrise service on Easter Day. Holy Week services at nearby churches are listed on the back of the "Y" program.

Many Associations try to reach all sections of their constituency with this special religious emphasis. For example, the following notes are taken from the Holy Week folder of a Y.M.C.A. in California (42):

Boys' Department. Movies, songs and story hour daily during Holy Week, culminating in a service of worship on Saturday at 11:00 A.M., when the technicolor film, "A Journey into Faith," will be shown. All clubs are urged to observe Easter in their regular meetings.

Men and Service Men. A dinner will be served for dormitory residents Thursday night, when an Easter program of worship will be held. Coffee and doughnuts are to be given to service men on Easter morning by the Women's Service Committee. Special Easter music will be played.

Staff and Employees. Breakfast for all staff members, employees, and their families, will be served Good Friday morning. An Easter message will be given.

Also in this instance 400 copies of Sallman's Head of Christ, with appropriate message, were available for persons desiring them and Bibles were placed in rooms where needed.

Hi-Y Clubs are active in sponsoring special services of worship at this season of the Church Year. A well-planned series

of this kind is reported by an Ohio Association (43), where boys' and girls' Hi-Y Clubs joined in conducting five services. On four weekday mornings at eight o'clock they assembled in the Episcopal Church for a brief service of worship and meditation. The series was introduced by a longer Palm Sunday service. The closing prayer of this service set the themes for the succeeding four days—"I Find Myself," "I Find Courage," "I Find My Neighbor," "I Find the Kingdom":

In the Holy Week to follow, O God, may we seek to know thy way through an earnest attempt to find our own true selves, to find the courage to follow the way we know to be right even though it may be the untrampled way, to find the fellowship of our neighbor and to make him feel his worth as a person, and to find the true course of thought and action which will bring the Kingdom to our hearts and to our world.

Frequently, these young people arrange a special service of worship for Good Friday or Easter morning, usually including a simple breakfast. One Association (12) reports that the Hi-Y and Tri-Hi-Y Clubs have been meeting for twelve years on Good Friday morning for fellowship and worship. All church youth groups are invited to come. Another Y.M.C.A. in Massachusetts (18) has held an Annual Hi-Y Easter Breakfast for twenty years. The service of worship this year centered around the theme of "International Peace." Gatherings of this kind are well attended; about 150 young people took part in each of the two above meetings.

A Good Friday Youth Service was sponsored for the first time in 1944 by the combined Girl Reserve, Tri-Hi-Y, and Hi-Y Clubs of Reading and Berks County (Pennsylvania). An eighteen-page mimeographed booklet was given to each participant, including not only the service for the morning but a collection of poems and readings for personal meditation.

Occasionally a Y.M.C.A. takes a leading part in providing a Good Friday service for the entire community. Such an event has become an established tradition in a Minnesota community (44), where the Ministerial Association joins in sponsorship. The most recent service was attended by 800 persons.

In some Associations, particularly those that have a chapel

in their buildings, a service of Holy Communion is held on Good Friday. One Y.M.C.A. (28) where such a service has a long tradition, arranges a series of fifteen-minute periods and designates a time when each group within the membership can come to partake of the Communion—dormitory residents, young men and boys, members of various branches, the Board of Directors, Metropolitan communities, and the staff.

SPECIAL DAYS OF PRAYER

Y.M.C.A.'s share in the observance of several special periods of prayer that are widely recognized within Christendom. One is World Day of Prayer in February, which is often adapted particularly to youth groups. Student Y.M.C.A.'s and Y.W.C.A.'s commonly join in making this an occasion of praying for the World's Student Christian Federation. Among the general Associations reporting an observance of this day is one from Pennsylvania (45) which makes this one of its Interchurch Youth Council projects. For three years a World Day of Prayer service has been conducted in one of the churches with good response.

The Week of Prayer and World Fellowship in November is sponsored annually by the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations and the World's Young Women's Christian Association. The guide to worship prepared for this special emphasis is widely distributed among Y.M.C.A.'s in this country. In 1943, 50,000 copies of "Eternal Certainties" were distributed to Associations in the United States. In many cases little is done except handing these pamphlets out to individuals. Some Associations have a brief noonday devotional service each day for employees and friends. Others plan one period during the week for special recognition through worship and a brief message. The latter practice, for example, has been followed for a number of years by a Michigan Association (46) that holds a dinner and inspirational service stressing the world-wide character of the Y.M.C.A. fellowship.

The most extensive Week of Prayer program to come to our attention is put on by an Association in a relatively small North Carolina Community (47). In co-operation with the schools, a short prayer service is held in the five grammar

schools each day of the week just before the opening of school under the auspices of Gra-Y and Teen-Y Clubs. A one-page service of worship is provided for each participant. The total attendance last year at this series of meetings was about 5,000. In the high schools two special meetings are arranged for the entire student body under Hi-Y and Tri-Hi-Y auspices. Meanwhile in the Y.M.C.A. itself a short meeting for prayer and meditation is held each morning and in all regular activities conducted in the building a few minutes are set aside for observance of the Week of Prayer. Included in the meditations of these various groups are prayers for an early and durable peace, for enemies, for those who suffer in every land, for prisoners of war, as well as for the work of the Y.M.C.A. in specific sections of the world.

OTHER SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Although information on other types of special religious observances in Y.M.C.A.'s is more meager, a few instances may be cited which illustrate fairly widespread practices:

Thanksgiving. In a large city of the Far West (48) a city-wide Youth Thanksgiving Service is sponsored by the Hi-Y Clubs on Thanksgiving morning. This service, conducted for the last ten years, has become quite an event. It is held in the City Auditorium and attendance runs from 2,000 to 3,500. The High School Music Department provides an orchestra and a chorus of 400 voices. All parts of the service except the invocation, special message, and benediction are taken by boys.

Another Association (49) reports a Thanksgiving program for its own boys which includes a religious service and an offering for World Service.

Christmas and New Year. It is taken for granted by most Y.M.C.A.'s that the Christian emphasis will be strong in all programs during the Christmas season. Although the "party" element is usually stressed with boys, there is also the singing of carols and the telling of stories. Both the men's and the boys' lobbies are frequently decorated in ways to stress the real purpose of Christmas. Sometimes the young men of the "Y" put on a party for worthy boys of the community.

A relatively few Associations hold Watch Night services on New Year's Eve. One Railroad Y.M.C.A. (17) conducts a

service of this kind for the community that lasts for three hours and includes an extensive program of music. Another Association (50) reports a New Year's Day Open House program in which a period of spiritual fellowship found a natural place.

Mothers' Day. A number of Associations hold Mother-and-Son Breakfasts, not always on Mothers' Day. Frequently these and the traditional Father-and-Son Banquets are used as an opportunity for Christian emphasis in home relationships. One unusual practice, reported to have been an event in an Ohio Association (34) for twenty years, is a Mothers' Day Breakfast for the men of the dormitory, featured by a mother's letter which each man receives at his place.

RACE RELATIONS AND INTERFAITH OBSERVANCES

Brotherhood Week in February is observed in a number of Y.M.C.A.'s, although the exact extent of this practice is not known. An Indiana Association (51) reports taking the initiative in arranging a Fellowship of Faiths meeting for the last seven years. Another "Y" (44) held in 1944 the fifth annual Y.M.C.A. Mass Meeting of Catholics, Jews, and Protestants. This meeting sponsored by the Religious Work Committee drew an attendance of 750 men. One of our branches serving Negroes primarily (52) for seven years has observed Race Relations Sunday by holding an afternoon program for the community under the auspices of the Religious Work Committee.

RELIGIOUS EMPHASIS WEEK

A limited number of Y.M.C.A.'s set aside a few days—apart from Holy Week—for a special religious emphasis for their own members. Several meetings are held each day and an outside speaker is usually brought in. For example, an Association in New York State (53) held for two days what it called a Christian Emphasis Visitation. A prominent minister from another city was brought in to speak to Hi-Y Clubs, leaders, and other groups.

One Association in North Carolina (47) has conducted a Religious Emphasis Week for the past ten years. In 1944 a leader with a background of special experience in youth work spent four days speaking to many groups in the Y.M.C.A.

and the community. In this instance particular attention was given to the schools. In addition to addresses in the high schools and grammar schools, the leader spent from two to four hours each day in personal counseling among high school students. It is the custom in this series to ask for written individual reactions and to press for a decision to live as a Christian. It is reported that thirty young people joined churches as a result of this year's Religious Emphasis Week. Over a period of ten years the percentage of church memberships among the high school students in this Association has increased from 57 to 77 per cent.

Several Y.M.C.A.'s in the Pacific Coast states conduct Spiritual Emphasis Weeks. One of them (54) states the purpose of this program as follows:

Many who are interested in the Y.M.C.A. feel that a real part of our service is neglected as long as we do not from time to time make specifically religious activities and experiences available to our members. It is not enough to say that all our activities bear this Christian emphasis. . . . The Lenten period is an appropriate time to give attention and recognition to the "C" in the Y.M.C.A. . . . The general idea is to set aside a week, the week preceding Holy Week, to remind all of us in the Y.M.C.A. of our Christian heritage and purpose. All of us will be invited to participate—Board, staff, boys, young men, men and women. During this week all activities and events will bear some definite relation to this theme.

Special events were planned for each day of the week:

- Monday — A family night, with the motion picture "The King of Kings" as the feature.
- Tuesday — Board of Directors and members of standing Committees. A service of worship and talk on "The Religious Objectives of the Y.M.C.A."
- Wednesday — Older boys' meeting. Brief service of worship and talk by outstanding speaker.
- Thursday — Residents' meeting. Singing and talk.
- Friday — Younger boys' rally. Talk built around stories of Jesus.
- Sunday — Doughnuts and coffee for service men and residents. Songs and a brief talk. Invitation to attend church.

This program was supplemented by a lobby display of religious literature, posters throughout the building, a recorded music program each evening, and a brief folder, "The 'C' in the Y.M.C.A.," sent to all members and friends. The staff met each day for a series of discussions on "Criteria for Religious Experience."

A significant variation of this plan was made by the Seattle Y.M.C.A. in 1944 by setting aside a month for spiritual emphasis. Adapted to the Centennial celebration, this emphasis culminated on June 4th by the observance of World Y.M.C.A. Sunday in the churches. The theme for the month was "God's Will for Today's World." To assist in presenting this subject and handling discussions with many groups, the Committee on Spiritual Emphasis recruited a speakers' bureau from among the younger ministers of the city. Two luncheon conferences were held with this group of fourteen ministers, preparatory to their mission. The president of a nearby college came in for three days as a special guest speaker. Although a few large meetings were held, this project was designed primarily to reach regular groups and committees.

At this point it should be added that many Student Christian Associations have sponsored Religious Emphasis Weeks as a regular practice in normal times. Sometimes this program is called an Embassy. It is held in co-operation with other religious forces of the college or university. One or more leaders come to the campus for a week, speak at chapel services and in classrooms, lead discussions in fraternity houses, and are available for personal interviews.³⁹

CONFERENCES

Another familiar type of special religious emphasis is the conference. Y.M.C.A.'s pioneered in the development of older boys' conferences. It is doubtful whether any other technique of Christian education has influenced large numbers of boys so deeply as these gatherings for a week or weekend under highly skilled leadership. Most of these conferences are held on a state, area or national basis. They are not included in

³⁹A mimeographed bulletin, "On Planning an Effective Religious Emphasis Week" is available from the Program Commission of the National Intercollegiate Christian Council, 600 Lexington Avenue, New York City.

this handbook, which is pointed particularly toward local Associations, but their importance is such as to deserve special study. We include here only two illustrations, among a number that could be given, of conferences sponsored by city Y.M.C.A.'s:

One Ohio Association (43) has a Committee on Postwar Problems that for two or three years has co-operated with the Council of Churches and the American Friends Service Committee in bringing to the city an outstanding speaker for one-day conferences. In 1943, Paul Harris, Jr., was the speaker on the general theme, "Contributing to a Lasting Peace," and, in 1944, Kirby Page dealt with "Christianity's Contribution to a Just and Lasting Peace." In addition to general meetings for the public, Mr. Harris addressed a high-school assembly and a youth forum.

For twenty-six years the Religious Work Committee of the Wabash Avenue Department of Chicago Y.M.C.A. has co-operated with the Chicago Sunday School Superintendents' Council in sponsoring a city-wide Older Boys' Conference. In recent years this conference has been held over the Labor Day weekend. The boys assemble on Friday evening at the Y.M.C.A. and leave for camp the next morning.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE SPECIAL GATHERINGS

Events of the kind described in this chapter are in some respects the most common forms of Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program. They are likely to come first to the mind of one who is asked about "religious activities" in the Y.M.C.A. Just because they are likely to be taken for granted, it is important to comment on their significance and to recognize the conditions under which they are likely to be most fruitful.

1. Association leaders need to be alert to make the most of great occasions in the church year, both for their own members and in co-operative projects for the entire community. The Christmas season and the period preceding Easter are times when Y.M.C.A.'s can join with home, school and church in making a united impact on the life of growing youth. These are occasions when religion seems a natural part of life; on these special days even nominal Christians think of attending church. Here, if at no other time, one would

expect Christian Associations to make clear their central purpose to all sections of their constituency.

2. It is profitable for a Y.M.C.A. to plan for at least one or two other occasions during the year when special attention shall be given to religion. The Week of Prayer in November is particularly well suited to this purpose because it gives an opportunity to stress world fellowship and the problems of a durable peace. A series of meetings during the winter, perhaps with outside speakers, has proved valuable as a means of giving special attention to the place of religion in the regular program of the Association.

3. The principle underlying all of these special religious gatherings should be recognized: that normal religious expression requires for its vitality occasional high points of celebration and challenge. Religious experience does not run on a dead level; it thrives on periodic opportunities for re-examination and renewal. These occasions call for the fullest use of color and drama and all legitimate agencies of emotional stimulus.

4. The danger in all special emphases is that the inspiration they engender will not carry over permanently into everyday living. Therefore, Y.M.C.A. leaders need to apply their best educational wisdom so that there will be no let-down when the special occasion is over. They will utilize these red-letter days and weeks to bring about a genuine deepening of understanding on the part of youth and adults of what it means to be a Christian. They will provide practical helps for a continuing nurture of the devotional life. They will show the inseparable relation between personal consecration and social reconstruction. They will recognize the great days of the Christian calendar as an opportunity to strengthen the consciousness of belonging to a historic world movement. They will give particular attention at these seasons to relating individuals more vitally to the churches of their choice.

CHAPTER VIII

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS

UP TO THIS POINT, attention has been focused on the content of the program rather than on the auspices under which it is being conducted. We have been referring to programs of Young Men's Christian Associations, isolating them for convenience from all other religious and educational agencies. We know that in practice such sharp separation cannot be made. Actually, much of the Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program is carried on in conjunction with churches and schools, less frequently with homes.⁴⁰ In this chapter we examine these relationships, not primarily from the administrative angle but from the viewpoint of program planning and content.

The concrete instances cited in this section will take on more significance if seen against the background of issues that are being raised regarding the relationship of Y.M.C.A.'s to churches and schools. These questions are by no means new; over a period of years periodic studies have been made of the relation of the Y.M.C.A. to the Churches. The latest of these studies, by S. Wirt Wiley, provides an authoritative review of the varying patterns of relationships during these hundred years.⁴¹

In this chapter it is our purpose to review the major types of relationships, so far as program is concerned, that now exist between churches or schools and Y.M.C.A.'s and thus to throw light on two clusters of questions:

⁴⁰Our information about Y.M.C.A. programs related to home life and experience is too fragmentary to warrant consideration in this handbook. Here is another important area for further study from the standpoint of Christian emphasis.

⁴¹*History of Y.M.C.A.-Church Relations, op. cit.*

Looking at relationships between churches and Y.M.C.A.'s from the standpoint of concrete programs, how can co-operation be most effective? At what specific points can co-operative enterprises between churches and Y.M.C.A.'s be most helpful to both movements? Where can co-operation on matters of program take place to mutual advantage?

Can the Y.M.C.A. program with youth in our public schools have a strong Christian emphasis without violating the American tradition of separation between church and state? What kinds of relationship to the schools is it appropriate for the Y.M.C.A. to develop?

CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS

Use of Y.M.C.A. resources by churches. We use the term "resources" here to include everything from physical facilities to leadership. Y.M.C.A.'s frequently provide a meeting place for gatherings sponsored by the churches or jointly planned. The "Y" basketball floor is often at the disposal of church teams, singly or in leagues. In addition to these obvious and widespread uses of Y.M.C.A. facilities, the possibility of making other resources available is illustrated by the following list of services offered by a suburban branch of a large Eastern city Association (45):

Special music is constantly being supplied for local church services. The "Y" Chorus has sung in more than a dozen churches. The "Y" Trumpet Quartet is in popular demand. The Brass Choir is available especially for open-air services in spring and fall.

Motion pictures are used to advantage by some churches. The "Y" offers to furnish, without charge, a complete projection outfit with operator for the showing of either sound or silent 16 mm. films.

Two secretaries are available for *talks and addresses* before young people and other church groups. Many interesting discussions on timely Christian topics have been led by "Y" men.

The resources of the "Y" *office, library, and staff* are always available to assist church committees and young people in exploring topics or planning programs.

Another Association (55) sends occasional bulletins to pastors regarding Church-Y.M.C.A. relations. One of these bulletins consists of a full page of some twenty specific points at which the Y.M.C.A. is prepared to help the churches.

Few Y.M.C.A.'s provide all of these services, but this general approach to churches is common particularly in situations where the "Y" has no building except an office headquarters. In such instances the chief function of the Y.M.C.A. is to provide leadership for activities carried on in churches, homes, and schools. In a number of cities where the "Y" does have a building, the secretary in charge of boys' work gives considerable time to consulting with pastors or lay church leaders about their youth work. Sometimes the Association secretary is asked to lead boys' groups within the churches or to find and train leaders for them.

Recognition of Y.M.C.A. groups in churches. A converse arrangement is to be found when churches make facilities available for meetings sponsored by the Y.M.C.A. One downtown city Association (56) for years has held a series of weekly forums in the auditorium of a nearby church. Hi-Y Clubs occasionally hold large interclub meetings in churches:

A city branch Y.M.C.A. with no building has been holding semi-annual Hi-Y Membership Nights at various churches (57). In this case there are sixteen clubs and the average attendance runs to 300. Worship services are carefully planned.

A smaller Association (58) reports that an annual Hi-Y Induction is always held in one of the churches. The service of worship is for members and parents.

One city Association (59) reports a Friendly Indian service in conjunction with the Sunday morning worship of a church in the community. In the church bulletin it is explained that "the Friendly Indians are groups of boys from eight to twelve years who meet in churches under the guidance of an experienced leader." Twelve "tribes" and the sponsoring churches are listed.

Another Y.M.C.A. in a large city (57) for several years has sponsored a Church League recognition service in one of the seventeen co-operating churches. In a worshipful setting recognition is given to outstanding players and to other individuals. Ministers say it is one of the few activities that really draws together young people from the Protestant churches.

In this connection may be cited the observance of World Y.M.C.A. Sunday on June 4, 1944, as a part of the Centennial Year program. A pamphlet for use by pastors and other leaders was prepared under the joint auspices of the Federal

84 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

Council of the Churches of Christ and the National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s. Entitled "To Strengthen a Historic Bond,"⁴² it stressed the Christian purpose of the Young Men's Christian Association and suggested a number of points where there is a need for churches and Y.M.C.A.'s to work together. Forty-five thousand copies of this pamphlet were distributed, one to each pastor, through local Y.M.C.A.'s and federations of churches.

Reports from more than 300 Associations show that World Y.M.C.A. Sunday was widely observed in one or all of the following ways: (a) by a sermon or some other extended statement at the morning service; (b) by announcements and comments in the church bulletins; (c) by a talk or discussion in a young people's group; (d) by an interchurch gathering. A conservative estimate indicates that at least half the Protestant churches in communities where there are Y.M.C.A.'s joined in some way in this observance. It is a matter of some concern, however, that in forty per cent of the reported cases there was no joint planning for this occasion. In a large majority of these communities the observance of June 4 was reported to result in a strengthening of cordial relationships between churches and Y.M.C.A.'s.

In light of experiences of this kind, some Association leaders are raising the question whether it would be wise to work toward a nation-wide annual recognition of Y.M.C.A.'s or of "Y" boys' groups. Any development of this kind, however, is likely to grow up locally rather than as a nation-wide observance.

Y.M.C.A. PROMOTION OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND AFFILIATION

It is common practice to post church directories in Y.M.C.A. lobbies. Occasionally cards are printed for individual distribution, listing all churches in the vicinity. A card of this kind prepared by the Central Y.M.C.A. of Washington, D. C., carries the statement: "The high purpose of the Young Men's Christian Association is to help make the Church a vital element in every community."

Special attention has been given to encouraging service

⁴²Copies are still available from Association Press. Single copies, 15 cents; special rates for quantities.

men to attend church, through both U.S.O. Clubs and city Associations. A major purpose of the Sunday breakfasts referred to earlier is to stimulate contacts with pastors of the community. A Sunday Breakfast Club for service men meets regularly at the Central Y.M.C.A., Chicago, in cooperation with the U.S.O. and the Chicago Church Federation. A directory of nearby churches is made available.

A limited number of Y.M.C.A.'s are seeking in systematic fashion to promote appreciation of the churches on the part of high-school youth. The most extensive program of this kind is the Church Appreciation Campaign sponsored by the State Y.M.C.A. of Indiana. The basic objective of this program is "to draw more people into the Church through a program of education." Why should the Y.M.C.A. take the initiative in such a campaign?

The Young Men's Christian Association believes that the Church is the basic organization to maintain and extend the principles of Christianity. Since the Y.M.C.A. is an interdenominational agent of the Church, it can bring new contacts to the churches with its multiplicity of groups and draw together Christian forces on a community-wide basis. The Y.M.C.A., as well as the Hi-Y Club, has a responsibility to the Church in helping at whatever points possible to further the ideals and objectives of the Church.

This Church Appreciation Campaign has been conducted in a number of Indiana towns in this manner: The Hi-Y Club takes the lead, but organizes a general sponsoring student committee with church youth group representation. The support of the high-school principal first must be assured. The co-operation of the Ministerial Association, civic clubs, and other groups is sought. Speakers are provided for home rooms in the school, church young people's societies, and Parent-Teacher Associations. Newspapers print articles written by local people dealing with the contribution of the churches to civilization.

Another unusual approach to church relationships is a religious survey in high schools conducted every four years by an Association in the East (37). This is a project of the Hi-Y Clubs, supported by the Religious Program Committee of the Y.M.C.A. The survey card asks simply for information about the individual's church affiliation or preference and about at-

tendance at Sunday School or church young people's society. This information is made available to the Hi-Y Council and to ministers and Sunday School superintendents.

Direct evangelistic programs are far less common in Y.M.C.A.'s now than two or three decades ago. For many years Associations were asked to report annually the number of decisions made and the number of persons joining churches through Y.M.C.A. efforts. It is obviously difficult to present statistics of this kind, because the influence of the Y.M.C.A. as such upon a boy's decisions can scarcely be measured. There is still a place in the annual report, however, to indicate how many persons were influenced to join the church. In recent years about 125 Associations have made reports of this kind, totalling about 2,400 new accessions to the church each year. The following report from a Y.M.C.A. in the Southern Area illustrates the procedure still in effect in some Associations (60):

For many years we have been carrying on what we call our Evangelistic Easter Service. These services consist of all gymnasium groups having special meetings the week preceding Easter. We have various ministers of the city give direct opportunities to the boys to make the Christian decision. Every year a number express the desire to join a church of their choice. Following these meetings our boys' work director will advise the pastor of the church of the boy's name and his desire to join the pastor's church.

Methods used by Y.M.C.A.'s to promote church attendance and affiliation vary greatly with the religious mores of the community. In some cities where the religious background of high-school pupils is very mixed, it would be difficult to make a direct approach to church appreciation through the schools. The churches themselves vary widely in their attitudes toward evangelism. It is safe to conclude, however, that a considerable number of Y.M.C.A.'s in one way or another seek to stimulate their members to active church affiliation.

Co-operative youth programs. We turn now to a type of relationship that represents joint planning and co-operative activity on the part of Y.M.C.A.'s and churches. It is logical that this co-operation should take place primarily in the area of youth programs and through the medium of a youth coun-

cil. It is a common practice for the Y.M.C.A. to be related in some way to the Protestant interchurch youth councils that exist in many communities and to the less numerous interfaith youth fellowships. The role of the Y.M.C.A. varies. Sometimes a Y.M.C.A. secretary initiates the formation of a council; frequently he is the adult adviser. Some of these organizations are called "Y.M.C.A. Interchurch Youth Councils." In other instances the Y.M.C.A. takes its place as one of the agencies co-operating with the Christian Youth Council; occasionally its Hi-Y Clubs are represented in the council on the same basis as church young people's groups.

The following report illustrates the part often played by the Y.M.C.A. in the formation of a youth council:

Our Association sponsors the Christian Youth Council which is a representative group of high-school students from each of the churches plus representatives from the Hi-Y and Tri-Y clubs. It is the duty of this council to act as a clearinghouse for all interchurch affairs and to sponsor monthly religious interchurch meetings. It also sponsors monthly parties with one of the churches acting as host for the event. (61)

The constitution of a Y.M.C.A. Interchurch Youth Council in a southern state (62) reads: "The Council shall be sponsored and guided by the Lake Charles Young Men's Christian Association, through its Church Relation Committee." This council has conducted large Easter sunrise services. It has organized an unusual Youth Week with a varied program including an opening dramatic service of worship and a series of meetings on the next four evenings where young people attend discussion or hobby groups followed by movie shorts of the lives of great men.

In another city (63) the Youth Division of the Council of Churches has joined with the Y.M.C.A. for eight years in conducting a monthly Y.M.C.A.-Church Fireside on Sunday evening at nine o'clock, with an average attendance of 200. This program provides for interchurch fellowship without detracting from the Sunday evening young people's program of individual churches.

Another illustration of a significant Christian Youth Council activity is the World Day of Prayer Service in a Wisconsin city (64), attended in 1944 by 800 people. A Y.M.C.A. secretary took a leading part in guiding this program.

88 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

Turning to recreational projects of these interchurch councils we give two illustrations out of many that could be cited. One is a "Christian Yuth-Nite" program for teen-age young people held in a Pennsylvania Association (65) in co-operation with city churches. Participants come at seven o'clock and are free to spend their time until 9:45 P.M. in a variety of activities including swimming, volleyball, bowling, other games, or motion pictures. Some listen to a religious broadcast for youth from New York City at nine o'clock. At ten o'clock the young people gather in the lobby for hymn singing and testimonies, followed by a speaker. From 300 to 600 persons have been attending these popular youth nights.

The second illustration is a Church-Y Night in a southwestern city (66) which has proved unusually successful. The origin and content of this program warrant more detailed description:

The Church-Y Night is a project of the Christian Youth Council, which came into being about two years ago. This Council draws heavily on the Y.M.C.A. for leadership and the general program secretary is its adviser. Forty-seven churches including eleven denominations are represented in the Council. When the problem of adequate teen-age recreation came to the fore, this group decided to offer a program that would be attractive to youth and at the same time in accord with Christian purposes. Each Saturday night—except in summer months, when the schedule is varied—300 young people gather at the Y.M.C.A. for a program that contains five distinct elements: (1) an inexpensive supper, served by individual churches in turn; (2) a twenty-minute period of entertainment, likewise put on by a different church each week; (3) division into eight elective groups for an hour—forum, drama, music appreciation, crafts, archery, Ping-pong, rifle range, and recreational leadership; (4) a common recreational period for forty-five minutes featuring folk dances; (5) a period of hymn singing seated on the floor around a fireplace, closing with a friendship circle and prayer. The directors of religious education of the city join in sponsoring this program and providing leadership. After the official close of the directed activities those who wish may stay on for a short period of social dancing. Since the capacity of the "Y" building for such a program is limited to 300, each participating church has a quota and selects each week those young people who are eligible to attend.

Where interchurch youth councils are active, the annual conferences that are ordinarily held are unusually fruitful from the standpoint of Christian emphasis. Y.M.C.A. secretaries are often equipped to take a leading part in planning these conferences. An outstanding illustration is the Greater Harlem Christian Youth Conference held annually at the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. of New York City. This conference extends over a weekend and includes lively panel discussions on religious and social questions.

Occasionally, Y.M.C.A.-Church co-operation with youth extends to the content of the Sunday evening programs. In an Eastern city (7) twelve churches have been co-operating in a "University of Life" program. During the winter these churches combine forces and offer a curriculum for varying age groups on an elective basis, securing better leadership and larger numbers than if each church conducted a separate program. The sessions are held in different churches. The project is sponsored by the Y.M.C.A. in this instance and the boys' work secretary is dean of the "faculty."

CO-OPERATIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Years ago, Y.M.C.A.'s played a leading role in the development of training courses for Sunday School teachers. With the development of denominational and interdenominational leadership training schools the Y.M.C.A. usually receded into the background. Frequently, however, it still provides a meeting-place and in other ways joins in the promotion of leadership training.

Sometimes the project bears the name of the Y.M.C.A., although the churches join in sponsorship. One New Jersey Association (67) reports a "Y.M.C.A. School of Religion, an Institute for Training Lay Church Workers." Another Y.M.C.A. (52) for eighteen years has been conducting leadership institutes for church workers. At present it offers a ten-week series in both fall and spring, following standards of the International Council of Religious Education. Another program on a more restricted basis is a series of lectures every Friday evening for "Bible Class Teachers of thirty local churches." (68)

Occasionally an Association offers a more specialized lead-

ership training program in the field of recreation. In one city (10) a Christian Recreation Leaders' Association was organized by a committee of church leaders and the Physical Department Committee of the Y.M.C.A. The organization is composed of young people who have assumed leadership responsibility in their churches. The training program includes a wide variety of recreational activity including Banquet Planning, Song Leadership, Folk and Singing Games, and Worship Service Planning.

It is not unusual for Y.M.C.A.'s to join with churches in conducting Daily Vacation Church Schools. In light of the current revival of interest in weekday religious education, it would be interesting to know what part Y.M.C.A.'s are taking in this movement also. An Association in a large Eastern city (69) reports participation on an equal basis with Protestant churches in planning weekday religious instruction in the junior high school.

Other Co-operative Projects. Although our accent in this review of co-operative projects has been upon youth, Y.M.C.A.'s and churches are joining in many other significant ways. We shall merely sketch a few of them:

The Y.M.C.A. joins with twenty-three churches in one section of a large city (70) to hold *open-air services* during the summer in a nearby park.

An Association in Iowa (71) joins in sponsoring annually a community-wide *Christian Laymen's Meeting*. Another Association (72) has been instrumental in developing a *Churchmen's Club*, composed of sixty key laymen representing twenty churches. This club meets monthly for a luncheon. All Church-Y.M.C.A. activities such as Father-and-Son Week and athletic leagues are cleared through this club. In addition to stimulating co-operative endeavors, this club becomes in effect, through its executive committee, the body that plans the religious work of the Y.M.C.A.

Somewhat similar is the Churchmen's Luncheon Club formed ten years ago in an Ohio city under the sponsorship of the Y.M.C.A. (73). This club has continued to meet regularly once a week with a minimum of constitutional formality. In addition to its program of weekly speakers and discussions, the club has taken the initiative in a number of community projects, such as a World Brotherhood observance with Cath-

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHURCHES, SCHOOLS 91

olics and Jews, the organization of the very successful Union Lenten Services, and recently the organization of a city-wide plan for returning service men. The club is reported to have done much to make relations between the churches and the Y.M.C.A. very pleasant. The attendance of ministers is about one fourth of the total and all officers are laymen.

The winter of 1944 marked the seventh season for a series of eight *union services* sponsored by the Y.M.C.A. and a number of co-operating churches in an Illinois community (74). This program, entitled the Sunday Evening Club, presents outstanding religious leaders. "It seeks to provide a Sunday evening service which will be well attended and bring to this community some of the outstanding pulpit voices of America." The expense is underwritten by the Y.M.C.A. Board of Directors.

An Association in a mid-western industrial city (75) has for several years brought in for a week an *outstanding speaker* who addresses gatherings in churches and schools. Building on this experience, in 1944 the "Y" was largely responsible, together with the Council of Churches, for bringing E. Stanley Jones for a week's preaching mission.

In the *Christian Mission on World Order*, sponsored in 100 cities in November, 1943, by the Federal Council of Churches, Y.M.C.A.'s occasionally took a significant part. In one community in Pennsylvania (76) a Y.M.C.A. secretary served as the executive in developing a follow-up program which included the formation of several training groups for study, presentations to service clubs and other gatherings, and a culminating mass meeting.

A Y.M.C.A. in Chicago that serves Negroes primarily (52) holds frequent *meetings for laymen* on Sunday afternoons under the joint sponsorship of their Religious Work Committee and the Interchurch Laymen's Council. One of these was a symposium on "The Christian Layman's Part in Postwar Planning." Later a series of three evangelistic meetings was held on the theme "Christ for Today."

Holy Week Services are often sponsored jointly by Y.M.C.A.'s and churches. Two somewhat unusual illustrations come from small cities in Pennsylvania. In one (77) the Ministerium and the high school join with the Y.M.C.A. in a series of noonday services. In the other (78) a committee of ministers and lay-

men have conducted meetings in the larger industries at three fifteen-minute periods during the day from Monday to Friday of Holy Week.

One additional illustration will be cited because of its interfaith character. During the Lenten season of 1944 the people of Ottumwa, Iowa, witnessed an effective United Church Emphasis program. Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders formed a committee which sought to rebuild church support and attendance, stressing the importance of the church in the community. The Ottumwa *Courier* co-operated by publishing each Saturday a full-page illustrated message on religion. Every churchbell rang simultaneously on Saturday at noon and at 6:00 P.M. The chairman of the committee was the general secretary of the Y.M.C.A., who seemed to be in an unusually favorable position for heading an interfaith project.

Joint Church-Y.M.C.A. planning for *returning service men* is under way in a number of communities. This area of co-operation is so important that it deserves special attention and requires more information than is at hand at the present writing.⁴³

RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS

A major trend in Y.M.C.A. boys' work at present is an orientation to school groupings—Hi-Y, Junior Hi-Y, Gra-Y. The objective is to form relatively small organized clubs through which our Christian purposes for persons may be realized. Boys are expected to uphold Christian standards in the school and the community. The official Hi-Y purpose is "To create, maintain, and extend throughout the school and community high standards of Christian character."

How the Christian emphasis may be expressed in the functioning of these organized groups has been considered in Chapter IV. Our interest at this point is in giving a few illustrations of specifically religious programs that are carried out in co-operation with the schools themselves.

The most common practice of this kind is the holding of religious services at certain times of the year in or near the

⁴³An extensive list of types of co-operation with service men on the part of churches and Y.M.C.A.'s in the New York area is available through the Y.M.C.A. of New York City or the Service Men's Council of the New York Federation of Churches.

school. One city Association (59) reports that for twenty years religious services have been held in the high school each Friday during Lent. This is apparently a forty-five-minute service attended by all students, since the average attendance is listed as 1,200. These services are planned by Hi-Y Clubs and Friendship Clubs. Another Association in Ohio (50) reports assembly services in the high school on four mornings during Holy Week, planned by the Hi-Y Worship Committee.

More frequently such devotional services are carried on outside school hours and attendance is on a voluntary basis. In one city (79) "spiritual fellowship services" are sponsored by Hi-Y and Girl Reserve groups in the high school before the opening of school on several mornings of Holy Week. Another Y.M.C.A. (76) joins with the Y.W.C.A., through Hi-Y and Girl Reserve leaders, in arranging devotional services in the Y.M.C.A. just before the opening of school on four mornings of Holy Week. This Association is within an eighth of a mile of a junior and a senior high school. The same boys and girls, along with older leaders, share in an early communion service on Good Friday.

The project of Y.M.C.A.-school relationships that has received most attention nationally is carried on by a branch in Kansas City (80). A number of years ago this Y.M.C.A. was located next door to a high school in order to provide a religious influence that would supplement the public school program. Hi-Y and Girl Reserve Clubs regard the "Y" building as the natural center of their activities. On every Thursday throughout the school year at 8:30 A.M. a devotional service is held in the "Upper Room" of the Y.M.C.A. This service is planned entirely by young people. From sixty-five to one hundred boys and girls attend this weekly service. During Holy Week "Pre-Easter Devotionals" are held each morning on the same basis. Some faculty members attend these services also. Speakers include ministers, teachers, and Association secretaries.

A few illustrations of religious programs conducted in cooperation with elementary schools can also be cited, in addition to those described in the preceding chapter. A Y.M.C.A. in Indiana (81) sponsored recently a Bible Character Essay Contest in the four upper grades of the elementary school. The contest was open to all boys in Gra-Y Clubs. Announce-

ments were made in the schools. The prize was a free week at camp or a free "Y" membership for a year.

Gra-Y Clubs usually meet after school hours and the religious emphasis is likely to be indirect. One report is at hand, however, of a Y.M.C.A. (82) that includes systematic ethical and religious instruction in its Gra-Y program on school time. In this instance the boys' work secretary is a trained religious educator. With the co-operation of the school authorities he spends one hour each week with nine groups in seven elementary and junior high schools. The groups are restricted in size and organized as clubs. Preceding the usual business and recreational activities is a period which opens with devotions and includes a talk and discussion on some theme pertinent to boy life and related to the Bible.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In light of the foregoing array of specific types of relationships now existing with churches and schools on the part of Y.M.C.A.'s, we offer a few deductions and suggestions for further study:

1. *The Y.M.C.A. is in a position to exert a highly important influence for religious unity.* Because of its lay character and its interdenominational constituency it is often able to take the lead in enterprises that no single church could attempt. Frequently it is able also to win the support of Catholics and Jews for religious enterprises that affect the entire community. One secretary puts it this way:

The "Y" plays a religious role as the unofficial, interdenominational religious center of a community. Not only is it common meeting ground, but, unfettered and aggressive, it may play a role that no other organization in the city can play. As one minister recently remarked at a unique meeting: "Who but the 'Y' could have called this group together!"

In the judgment of many who have had experience in the Y.M.C.A., this contribution to religious unity can be made without denying our Protestant heritage and with full freedom for the expression of an individual's Christian convictions.

2. *The trend is toward recognizing more clearly the interdependence of the Y.M.C.A. and the Christian Church.* The

illustrations given in this chapter support the thesis recently advanced by the General Secretary of the National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s:

The relationship of the Y.M.C.A. to the Church is seen as derivative, auxiliary, and supplemental.

The Y.M.C.A. was born in the Church and still derives its spiritual and most of its material sustenance from church people. . . . While autonomous, the Y.M.C.A. is utterly dependent upon the Church. Cut off from its sustaining life and resources, the Y.M.C.A. in its essential character could not survive. At the same time, the churches with all their youth activities would find that there are some things they can best do—indeed there are some things which they can only do—through this autonomous, interdenominational, interconfessional, world-wide, lay organization and youth movement now entering its second century.⁴⁴

3. *In developing local programs where the interests of both churches and Y.M.C.A.'s are concerned, responsible consultative and co-operative relationships need to be established.* The exact form of this relationship is less important than mutual confidence and practical co-ordination of effort. Association leaders need to guard against assuming that they represent the Protestant forces of the community unless there has been consultation by responsible parties. Particularly in projects involving specifically religious elements it is essential for a Y.M.C.A. committee to confer with church leaders. Ideally, in every community representatives of churches and the Y.M.C.A. would look carefully at the total religious needs of the community and agree on the allocation of specific responsibilities. Otherwise enterprises initiated by Y.M.C.A.'s in good faith could, and sometimes do, seem to churchmen competitive or inappropriate. The total needs are so great as to demand the greatest possible pooling and use of resources.⁴⁵

One of the most effective ways of achieving these cordial relationships is through informal contacts. One Association in

⁴⁴From address by Eugene E. Barnett, "Religious Role of the Y.M.C.A. as it enters its Second Century. Mimeographed.

⁴⁵For illustrations of profitable relationships on this basis, see a study by W. Glenn Roberts of Y.M.C.A.-U.S.O. work in industrial communities, *The Y.M.C.A. and the Church in War-industry Communities*. Industrial Services Department, 347 Madison Avenue, New York 17.

a large city (66) took the lead in forming an organization of the younger ministers of the city who meet regularly at the "Y" for recreation and discussion. Another Y.M.C.A. (30) makes a practice of getting in touch with new pastors as soon as they come into the city and recently invited to breakfast twelve of the youngest group of ministers to become better acquainted with one another and the Association.

4. *The forms of relationship and of co-operative activity with churches and schools will necessarily be adapted to varying local situations.* One of the variables is the strength and character of the ministerial association or council of churches. Another is the degree of religious homogeneity in the community. A third is the qualifications for religious leadership of the secretaries in a given Association. Some of the enterprises cited in this chapter as having worked successfully in one community might be entirely out of place in another. Rather than making many generalizations at this stage about relationships, both churchmen and Association leaders will do well to experiment further with a few clear principles in mind but a minimum of dogmatism about programs and procedures.

5. *When projects are undertaken under the joint auspices of Y.M.C.A.'s and churches or schools, the responsibility should be genuinely mutual.* Associations reporting such group activities are expected to follow criteria that are definitely prescribed in *Better Records*, their manual of record-keeping. The central requirement is that "the activity has been authorized and initiated on the basis of specific agreement between the Association and another agency, for which both assume responsibility."

CHAPTER IX

NEWER PROGRAM RESOURCES: RECORDINGS, RADIO, FILMS

CAN THE NEWER FORMS of communication, made available to us by advances in the arts and sciences, be used effectively in the service of religion? What new program aids are available to appeal to eye and ear—recordings, radio, films? Our purpose from the standpoint of Christian emphasis is twofold: (1) to discover what techniques and materials attract the interest of men and boys; (2) to study the effectiveness with which a religious message is conveyed through these newer media.

In a paper dealing with program services in a Railroad Y.M.C.A. (83) an illuminating comment occurs:

Recent attempts to hold religious programs have met with very little success. The latest experiment was the drawing together of the Protestant churches in the community and having their adult men's Sunday School classes meet in the Railroad building. It was hoped that those road men present would join in the services. After several attempts the idea was temporarily given up. Curiously enough, the men refused to attend these Sunday School classes but *they would sneak into the lobby and turn on a religious program on the radio* (italics ours).

Is this a typical reaction? Is the radio a competitor or an aid in developing a religious program?

A secretary was commenting recently on the adaptations he has made in the Sunday "Y" program. A Sunday afternoon lecture and religious service was once the standard Y.M.C.A. program. Now, he says, few young people would come to hear a speaker alone, but by bringing in the high-school orchestra for an occasional Sunday program and having the young people provide a period of special music, he has no difficulty in drawing a good audience.

The experience of U.S.O. Clubs has shown that recordings of sacred music and attractive displays of religious literature have reached large numbers who would never be touched by a conventional speech-and-discussion program.

With clues like this in mind, it should be profitable to review the experience of a number of Associations with visual aids and other newer program resources.

DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS

The oldest form of "visual aid" presumably is the exhibit. Reference already has been made to the practice of many Y.M.C.A.'s of rearranging the lobby at certain seasons of the year to convey a special message to all who enter. A variation of this plan was a "Holy Week display" in one Association (81), consisting of miniature scenes in relief representing four stages of Christ's passion. Carefully constructed from the artistic standpoint and changed each day to tell the story of the crucifixion and resurrection, this exhibit drew a great deal of attention.

Other Associations have presented Biblical exhibits of some kind. The most extensive project of this nature has been developed by Mr. A. S. Arnold of the Cone Memorial Y.M.C.A. (White Oak Branch) at Greensboro, North Carolina. Ten years ago Mr. and Mrs. Arnold made a trip to the Near East and began a remarkable collection of pictures, maps, curios and other articles relating to Bible times. This material is carefully arranged in the Arnold Biblical Room and is open to visitors at certain hours each day. A rather complete series of slides and motion pictures of Biblical lands is available for instructional purposes. Many groups from churches near and far visit this Y.M.C.A. Frequently the secretary gives an illustrated lecture to visitors.

RECORDINGS

At least three types of recordings are making a definite contribution toward a Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. programs:

1. Recordings of sacred music have proved their worth many times over in setting a mood for personal meditation or group worship. Many U.S.O. Clubs have a small room to which individuals can withdraw with records loaned from the

desk. One Association with a beautiful new chapel (8) uses recordings regularly in its weekly services and monthly staff devotions. An increasing number of Y.M.C.A.'s seem to be giving special attention to building up their library of fine musical recordings.

2. A limited number of Biblical stories, usually in dramatized form, are now available on recordings. Most noteworthy is "The Story of Jesus" on fifteen double-faced twelve-inch records.⁴⁶ By means of skillful narration, sound effects, and dialogue by professional artists, the story of the life of Jesus from birth to resurrection is told graphically and reverently. Each episode is complete in itself, making it possible to use any number of the records at one time. One Metropolitan Association (84) has used this set very widely, assigning it to different branches and to churches of the city. A detailed memorandum has been prepared with suggestions about varying ways of using the records. Often they are made the basis for discussion with boys' groups.

3. Other recordings of a less explicitly religious nature lend themselves well to Y.M.C.A. use. "A Message to Youth" by Dr. John R. Mott and the recording of the voice of Sir George Williams were extensively used during the Centennial Year. Several recordings are available emphasizing the World Service of the Y.M.C.A. "Lonely Valley," the story of George Washington Carver, makes a very effective approach toward interracial understanding. "The Grain of Wheat" is a dramatic presentation of the Easter message in a war-torn world. Recordings of this kind are not only of inspirational value but frequently may be used to introduce a discussion or to carry a message to the community.

RADIO

There is no sharp break between these two media, for recordings are often used in broadcasting and most of the records just mentioned have been played over the air by Y.M.C.A.'s that carry regular responsibility for radio programs. But so far as religious emphasis is concerned, the radio has much more limited value for use with Association groups. Its chief value in this connection is in making available good

⁴⁶Produced by Gibbons and Barron, Chicago, \$45.00 for the set. Available through Association Press.

radio religious services to men in the lobby. It is possible that some Y.M.C.A.'s have formed small listening groups to hear outstanding sermons and discuss them, but no project of this kind has come to our attention.

On the other hand, the radio does provide a channel for service to the community. If a Y.M.C.A. has something to say in the realm of religion, it can find ways of getting its message before the public over the radio. Frequently, Association secretaries or laymen are asked to take their turn in conducting a devotional service over a local station. One Y.M.C.A. in Indiana (51) gave an unusual twist to a program of this kind. It happened to be responsible for radio devotions on the week following Labor Day. Four different labor unions were asked to co-operate and to choose a speaker for each day. The program secretary of the "Y" assisted the men in the preparing of their talks. It was specified that the service should be definitely religious in character and not in any sense propagandist. The man who spoke on "Jesus the Carpenter" was so well received that there were many requests for a copy of his talk. On the fifth morning a representative of the employers conducted the service. As a result of this experience the "Y" secretary was approached by several union men for further help in public speaking. A report of this kind leads to the surmise that Y.M.C.A.'s could make an important contribution in many communities by arranging for more lay participation in radio devotional services.

Occasionally a Y.M.C.A. takes the initiative in planning a series of religious talks over the radio. The Religious Emphasis Committee of an Association in Louisiana (85) arranged a series of nine broadcasts on "Church History and Beliefs," one talk being given by a clergyman from each denomination or faith. A few instances have come to our attention of regular weekly broadcasts of the religious news of the week by a Y.M.C.A. secretary.

The outstanding long-term Y.M.C.A. radio program in the country is that of the Y.M.C.A. Angelus of Buffalo. The Angelus Hour is now in the fourteenth year of its existence. For some years this program originated in the Y.M.C.A. using church choirs and messages from ministers of the city. Now it originates from the studio every Saturday evening and the entire fifteen-minute program is under the direction of

the "Y." The choir is under the leadership of a trained music teacher. The program secretary, who has directed the project through the years, prepares the script and gives a brief message. The Buffalo Broadcasting Company reports that about 100,000 radio sets within a radius of fifty miles listen in on the Angelus. This group is much in demand also for conferences and other gatherings where a broadcast is simulated.

MOTION PICTURES

Our records indicate that a considerable and growing proportion of Y.M.C.A.'s are realizing the potentialities of films as a resource for religious emphasis. A few illustrations will indicate the types of films available and how they are being used.

An Association in Wisconsin (86) for two years has held Sunday evening services in which motion pictures are featured. Two four-week series were arranged, one in the fall and the second during Lent. Each program included special music and recordings wherever appropriate. The project was sponsored by the Committee on Religious Education in cooperation with the Hi-Y and Y's Men's Clubs. The average attendance was 250.

Another Y.M.C.A. (70) for some years has put on a program of religious films during Lent. In 1944, this series was announced as "Great Biblical Stories Inspiringly Told by Sound Motion Pictures." The meetings are held in the central lounge. A very brief talk is incorporated into the program.

It is more common for Y.M.C.A.'s to show films of this kind only on special occasions, particularly as a part of Christmas or Easter observances. "The King of Kings," a two-hour picture, is a favorite. "The Last Days of Pompeii" appears often in reports of these special showings.

A few Associations are beginning to realize the opportunity of making good films available to high-school groups. Of special value for such purposes is the American Bible Society's film, "The Book for the World of Tomorrow." This is a high-grade picture covering such matters as the history of early Biblical translation, the development of modern translations into hundreds of languages and dialects, and the actual distribution of the scriptures in many colorful settings. In one city (87) the Hi-Y Clubs sponsored the showing of this film in ten high-school assemblies. The reaction of students in all

cases was very favorable and modest contributions were made to the work of the Society.

In 1944, a film service for chaplains was established by the Army and Navy Y.M.C.A. in co-operation with the Salvation Army and the Service Men's Christian League, making religious films more widely available to service men. Under Army and Navy auspices also special attention is being given to films with social significance, which may well be related to a religious emphasis.

As one views the present situation so far as the availability and use of religious films are concerned, several conclusions can be drawn:

1. The number of first-class non-commercial motion pictures now available is limited but slowly increasing. Technical problems are so difficult and the costs of production so high that relatively few religious films that are up to the standard of commercial movies have been produced thus far. One hears occasionally of audiences that have been disappointed in highly advertised films on religious subjects. There is need for a more illuminating description of films on the part of distributing agencies in order that a careful selection can be made. The Y.M.C.A. Motion Picture Bureau is now giving special attention to religious subjects and recently has added greatly to its offerings through arrangements with the Religious Film Association.

Lists of films are soon outdated, but at the end of this chapter will be found a selected list of the best religious films available at the date of this writing. Attention is called especially to the Cathedral Films, a series of sound pictures based on stories from the Gospels. These are being produced on a high professional level by a director who is himself an ordained clergyman.

2. Considerable care must be taken in presenting religious films if they are to be of maximum value. Much depends on the setting in which they are shown and the expectation that is developed on the part of the audience. Above all they are to be used for inspiration and instruction rather than primarily for entertainment. If the purpose is worship, the film should, as a rule, be preceded by music and perhaps by a passage of scripture that provides a setting. Worship outlines and discussion guides may be had on request for many of

the religious films available from the Y.M.C.A. Motion Picture Bureau. If the purpose is instruction, some one should be prepared to lead a discussion based on previous acquaintance with the film. A brief folder may be prepared for the leader, giving pertinent facts related to the subject matter of the film and suggesting questions. Careful technical preparation should be made to assure smooth running and a minimum of distraction. Frequently, special attention needs to be given to promotion also, since neither religious nor educational films are popular with some groups.

3. The Y.M.C.A. that is alert to the effective use of religious films can often make a very welcome contribution to the churches and schools of the community. Particularly is this likely to be true in smaller communities. The average church has no adequate equipment for motion pictures, especially for sound films. The experience of a few communities where Y.M.C.A.'s have established a film service, on religious and other subjects, indicates that this is a project that could be widely undertaken with profit. In some instances there is no charge for this service, except for the actual rental fee. Where Y.M.C.A. resources are limited, churches usually will be glad to share in the cost of securing equipment for cooperative use.

As already illustrated by the film, "The Book for the World of Tomorrow," high-type pictures on religious subjects may be welcomed in school assemblies. Hi-Y and Gra-Y Clubs provide a natural sponsorship for occasional presentations of this kind.

Filmstrips and slides also are effective when used for illustrated lectures in churches and schools. One secretary who serves a number of high schools (88) reports using with great success a series of filmstrips made up of great religious paintings.⁴⁷ During the past year he held thirty-four showings in school assemblies. Without doubt visual materials of good quality, when skillfully used, have a more striking and lasting effect than the ordinary assembly talk on religion.

Underlying all of these suggestions is the assumption that some member of the "Y" staff has acquired the knowledge and technical skill necessary for effective use of visual aids.

⁴⁷*Christ and the Fine Arts*, 90 art masterpieces from the book of this title by Cynthia Pearl Maus, in five film strips.

Such skill is within the grasp of any one who is willing to give a modest amount of time for study and experiment. The Y.M.C.A. Motion Picture Bureau, with offices in four cities, is prepared to give advice about equipment and to provide a variety of other services. Courses in summer schools and institutes are available for those who desire more detailed instruction.

One final word in relation to the entire content of this chapter: many programs use a combination of music, recordings, and films. The program secretary has at his disposal a variety of new resources which may help to "tell the old, old story" in such a way that its message will be fresh and stirring to modern youth.

RELIGIOUS FILMS OF SPECIAL MERIT

(For details see Y.M.C.A. Motion Picture Bureau catalogue and Y.M.C.A. imprinted edition of Religious Film Association catalogue.)

Cathedral Film subjects

- A Certain Nobleman—2 reels
- Child of Bethlehem—2 reels
- Story of the Prodigal Son—2 reels
- Who is My Neighbor—3 reels
- No Greater Power—2 reels
- Journey into Faith—3 reels
- *Man of Faith—2 reels
- *A Woman to Remember—2 reels
- *In process of production

- The King of Kings—12 reels
- The Kindled Flame—3 reels
- The Last Days of Pompeii—10 reels
- For Times Like These—1 reel
- Book for the World of Tomorrow—3 reels
- The First Easter—3½ reels
- I Am the Way series—13 one-reel subjects from "When Jesus Was Born" to "The Living Christ"
- Life of St. Paul series—5 episodes (On the Road to Damascus, Way of Salvation, Faith Triumphant, Grace of Forgiveness, Crown of Righteousness)—11 reels
- Power of God—5 reels
- Symphonies in Stone—8 one-reel subjects (Famous Cathedrals).
- The Lord's Prayer (100 feet)

CHAPTER X

RELIGIOUS SETTINGS AND SYMBOLS

PEOPLE TALK somewhat vaguely about the "atmosphere" of a building and its effect on one's attitudes. More often than we realize it is possible to capture the attention of persons, stir their imagination, or stimulate their devotion by the physical environment itself. This is true both of the indirect influence of cleanliness and attractiveness of surroundings (Cleanliness is reputed to be next to godliness!) and also of the direct effect of the right kind of pictures and symbols. According to Eugene E. Barnett, "By and large the passerby or even the average member has seen little symbolism, poetry, beauty, or worship in the Y.M.C.A. building or in its program."

Some Y.M.C.A.'s have given careful thought to the selection and placing of paintings of good quality dealing with the life of Jesus or other specifically religious themes. One Indiana Association (81), for example, has placed such a picture on the landing of a much-used stairway and has painted in bright colors at a prominent point in the lobby the Y.M.C.A. emblem. Many other Associations could profitably study ways of making their lobbies and reception rooms more attractive and more obviously in keeping with the Christian purpose of the Y.M.C.A.

At the Christmas and Lenten seasons a considerable number of Y.M.C.A.'s rearrange or decorate their lobbies to convey a religious message. One secretary (76) writes:

A little alcove in the lobby makes a wonderful opportunity to provide an Easter "reminder." The corner is set off with wall board painted purple and gold. Against the back panel is placed a reading stand with a Bible. Above the stand is the noted picture of Christ in the garden. On either side of this simple display is an Easter lily. It challenges attention.

An Association in Western Pennsylvania (89) during Holy Week secured from the high school a large reproduction of "The Last Supper." This was placed in one of the rooms adjacent to the lobby. In front of the picture was set an altar with burning tapers and a light was focused on the picture. A mimeographed booklet was prepared as a guide to meditation. The room was visited by several hundred people during the week.

The Christian Emphasis Committee of another Pennsylvania Y.M.C.A. (14) makes a practice of displaying two or three religious pictures in the lobby during Lent and provides an interpretive folder for each.

Some Associations that do not have separate chapels have adapted other rooms to special religious purposes. In one city (39), for example, a room just off the lobby is arranged as a chapel during Lent and strains of recorded organ music are audible throughout the reception room. Built into the second floor of another Association (80) is an "Upper Room" with stained glass windows and a fireplace. Around the room are twelve chairs representing the twelve Apostles and the twelve young men who started the Y.M.C.A. A picture of Christ hangs over the fireplace. A Bible is always on the table. This room is used for induction services, personal meditations, and religious instruction.

Knowing that a number of Y.M.C.A.'s have been making effective use of chapels and that many others are interested in incorporating such a room into their future building program, we asked Mr. Judson McKim, a respected leader in the religious work of the Y.M.C.A., to write a special section for the handbook on this development.

ASSOCIATION CHAPELS

JUDSON J. MCKIM⁴⁸

The Young Men's Christian Association was founded because a group of upstanding young men in London were seeking God's way of life. They wanted to make the Christian life a natural way of living. So from the first they built the program of this new enterprise around wholesome and con-

⁴⁸Retired General Secretary, Cincinnati, Ohio; now director of educational programs, Station WKRC.

structive things that young people liked to do. From those early days until now, one of the dangers that have threatened the movement has been the ease with which means can be substituted for the end. Even now there are still Associations whose life is being burned out in a whirl of motion as they struggle blindly to keep the machinery going, obtaining but little tangible results and even less financial support as they wonder what in the world is the matter.

Of course the trouble is that they are not doing the things that George Williams and his young associates started out to do. The two operations are not the same process. One sought to demonstrate that there was a Christian way of living, a happy and at the same time a useful way of life. The second plan, without much thinking and no seeking at all, starts the machine at the top of the hill, where years of work have brought it, and then lets it run down. And when a person or an organization runs down, a slow process of walking back has to be utilized if successful living is ever attained. Resuscitation is accomplished in such cases only by vicarious sacrifice. At least no American Association has come back from living death to useful service by any other method.

Now what has this to do with chapels in Association buildings? Much in every way. Full many an Association has lost the magnetized needle of its goal. "Serve or die" is the edict of the ages, and in this materialistic day too many superficial leaders have slipped into their positions with the mistaken idea that action is production. They had not realized that "Pep without purpose is piffle."

Might it not be an entirely proper thing, in planning a new Association building, to start with the "headquarters place" for meeting God? It does not need to be a great room. In fact that would probably defeat its purpose. But it should be a proper room, easy of access. It should be located where the entrance doors are not so conspicuous that attention is called to those who enter for prayer or meditation or for the small meetings that from an early day until now mean so much to vital religion.

It is what one finds when one enters the room that is important. In fact, that is what determines the efficiency of any room for any purpose. Chapels, therefore, ought to be suggestive of the thing that is supposed to happen in chapels.

Gothic ceilings that suggest the uplifted hands in prayer; subdued light that suggests separation from the things of the busy workaway world; colored glass with either natural or artificial light set again in the Gothic frames to carry the thought that the worshipers are now in a different room, a place of prayer; not too comfortable seats, so that the room does not become a place for sleep instead of prayer; an altar, a small organ, a carefully selected picture or two that fit into the scheme of things; a little touch of the richness of life as given by beautiful (if small) rugs; and a churchly entrance to it all—these, with a good architect, will help the Association building to answer in a Christian way the needs of the community.

This makes, above other things, the Association building a little different from the other buildings among which it is set. And should it not have some differences rather than having such tedious conformity to the houses of business? Visit the average Catholic clubhouses and see how they have not forgotten the better part.

Built to help tell the world about the living God, what have these piles of brick and stone, that house the Association in most American cities, done to tell the world that these great buildings are Houses of God and for God? Thanks to the energy and artistry of the Building Bureau of the National Board of Y.M.C.A.'s, we are beginning to make our buildings express more of the beauty of life. But building committees are still forgetting to give folks a chance to sit down and talk to God about his love and care. And that at least was what George Williams and the young men who were with him had in mind when the idea of the Association came to them. Times and methods have changed, but young men's need of God has not changed.

Even in buildings already erected it is not impossible, sometimes with surprisingly low cost, advantageously to install a chapel. Almost every week one hears of some plans of this kind that are at least in the making. One that I know most about is the one built some seven years ago at the Central Parkway Branch in Cincinnati. Here this great plant, built by religious men and operated by men with religious purposes, had never had a chapel, largely because there had not been the vision as to how it might be operated with effectiveness.

Then one day, when plans for some remodeling of the building were under discussion, the executive secretary came into the general offices and opened his heart about not having a single quiet place for God to meet those who were anxious to be led. He at once found others ready to follow his leadership, although lay leaders at first were indifferent and some actually hostile.

By patience and persistence, the chapel was built in a splendid second-floor location near the elevators. Two classrooms were thrown together and inside walls of cinder blocks were constructed. With artificial lighting for the windows, artificial ventilation, churchly seats, a small church altar, a little organ, an appropriate picture of dignity, and a prayer rug hung on the wall, a chapel of beauty and dignity has been added to the equipment of that great plant.

Small weddings have been held there for those who for one reason or another had no church home in this city. Memorial services for persons worthy of remembrance in the Branch's life, group services for members of the Committee of Management and the staff, as well as various services for the different activity groups have all been held and have produced, without question, good psychological effects. Here at last those in charge of the property have taken seriously the declaration that the Association was a religious organization, and have provided a room where it is natural to open one's heart to God. How much easier it has been here to help youth center their thoughts for a period on God and his way of life than it has been by the use of rooms that were there for miscellaneous purposes.

Moreover, this room stands quietly to declare to all who pass its doors that those who direct the affairs of the Association still believe that God is in his universe and that he cares about what goes on. And how much that message has been needed by those hundreds of uniformed men who have daily thronged that great building during the hard days of this horrible war. More perhaps than has been realized, Hartman Chapel has become the visible heart of the Central Parkway Branch.

Another story with the same general theme can also be told about Cincinnati's beautiful University Branch. Here a front-corner, second-floor room was built into this unusual

plant at the very beginning. Because of the difference in the type of building program, the use has been somewhat different. But full many a prayer has been offered there that would never have found utterance but for that room. Many a small meeting with a religious emphasis has found a proper setting in that room arranged as a somewhat more general-purpose room. But the religious motif is plainly evident in both the structure and the furnishing of this room of preferential location and furnishing. Here, too, "Prayer was wont to be made." The room suggests it and many times the suggestions are followed. Surely this is in harmony with the basic purposes of our Movement.

Chapels, however, to be effective have to be in the hands of friends. Leadership which lacks either vision or skill will not find the chapel much of an addition to the Association program. In looking over the different ways that these chapels are made useful, one is struck with their adaptability in bringing the religious message of our Movement to bear upon many different groups in several different ways.

We note that in one chapel, built into the original plans, an old closet conceals a phonograph for the use of recordings in a most effective manner. Another reports the gift of an electric piano used helpfully on special occasions; in another one the old-fashioned organ of our boyhood days aids, it is felt, in producing the worshipful attitude. Well-chosen pictures in another chapel seem to be useful, while a study of church symbols by the architect and committee has done much to carry over the worshipful atmosphere. The chapel of the Portland, Oregon, Association maintains a busy schedule. It has an especially designed lighting system for its cathedral windows. This chapel can be opened into other rooms to care for special occasions.

While the general type of room and motif is fairly well established, the details are all handled in a multiple number of ways. As contrasted with the Gothic type of architecture, for instance, my own preference moves toward the Colonial, so well typified by the Hartford Association. It is American without being flashy, dignified without being cold, worshipful without being gloomy, mystical without being ghostly. I have my own reasons, too, for getting a lift from the Ward Adair Chapel in the Grand Central Railroad build-

ing in New York. Trenton, N. J., has done a good job of installation in an old building. The Northeastern Branch of Detroit seems to have a well-planned and intelligent use of its chapel. Toledo, Ohio, also understands how a chapel can become an effective tool in Association programs. These are only a few among those which a non-roving person happens to know about. But these are enough to point the way to the belated recognition of a chapel room in these places of Christian nurture which we know as the Young Men's Christian Association.

Reports indicate that good use is made of these Y.M.C.A. chapels for group meetings as well as for personal meditation. Boards of Directors usually insist that these rooms be reserved for strictly religious meetings. Typical uses are as follows: weekly staff devotional meetings; boys' chapel services each Saturday morning, usually in relays of small groups; daily chapel services for boys during the summer; Hi-Y inductions and other youth services; a weekly chapel service for dormitory residents; special services, particularly around Christmas and during Lent; occasional use by adult church groups; weddings; memorial services; organ recitals of sacred music. In fact, study of what is to be done is quite as much a matter of importance as the expenditure of any money at all, says that authority on the subject, the Building Bureau.

There are several books that may be of aid to a committee just beginning a study of how to develop a chapel room or improve one already built. Among those I know and have in my own constricted apartment-sized library are *The Bible in Art* by Clifton Harley and *Christian Symbolism in the Evangelical Churches* by Thomas Albert Stafford. Those who are specialists in this field can direct the inquirer to many others equally good.

What we need most of all is to have a little friendly conversation among ourselves and to see how small our vision has been during past years in providing rooms in Association buildings for everything else in the world for a man but a place of retreat with his soul. The encouraging thing is to see how quickly and quietly the failure is being remedied, when the truth finally dawns on the Movement. There are now and are yet to be too many lonesome souls in need of such sanctuaries, and we must provide for their need. One

general secretary writes: "We feel that the installation of this chapel—small, quiet, and conducive to worship—is one of the best things we have done."

In 1917, Donald Cox, a soldier in the London Rifle Brigade, spent a brief retreat at a center for rest and recreation and was inspired to write the following lines that appear on the walls or in the literature of a number of Y.M.C.A. Chapels:

Here is a quiet room.
Pause for a little space
And in the deepening gloom
With hands before thy face
Pray for God's grace.

Let no unholy thought
Enter thy musing mind.
Things the world hath wrought
Unclean, untrue, unkind,
Leave these behind.

Pray for the strength of God;
Strength to obey his plan.
Rise from your knees less clod
Than when your prayer began,
More of a man.

CHAPTER XI

THE EXPERIENCE OF LEADERSHIP

IF THERE IS any point regarding the Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program upon which common agreement is quickly reached, it is the central role of qualified and devoted leadership. The point of view that has prevailed in this handbook puts a premium on relationships between persons that are Christian in quality and on an interpretation of Christianity that stems out of personal experience. It is assumed that there will seldom be on the staff a man with the title of Religious Work Secretary. If religion is actually to operate in relation to all kinds of programs and experiences, every lay leader and employed officer in the Young Men's Christian Association must contribute toward the achievement of the central Christian purpose. Specific responsibilities may be assigned for special religious gatherings and study groups, but no committee member or staff worker can expect to be exempt from a share of responsibility for the "C" in the Y.M.C.A.

The way in which persons in the Y.M.C.A. develop depends in the long run upon the capacity of the leaders, both those who are employed and those who are volunteers, to give major direction to central purposes. . . . When the leaders of the Y.M.C.A. are genuinely religious persons who are at the same time skillful in dealing with the varied interests of individuals, there arises a situation in which the permeating influence of religion finds its best expression.

We must multiply the number of leaders (directors, secretaries, activity leaders, etc.) who are mature, devoted Christian men: *i.e.*, men who in their businesses and families deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly with their God; men who are alert to moral issues in community, national and world life, and in the war; men who are active, liberal-spirited churchmen; men who interest themselves in good causes not for the position or recognition this may bring, but because of honest concern for the purposes expressed.⁴⁹

⁴⁹Statements from two national Y.M.C.A. leaders, quoted in "Christian Emphasis in Wartime Program," *National Council Bulletin Supplement No. 5*.

A prominent layman with a concern for Christian emphasis maintains that the greatest single weakness of Y.M.C.A.'s in this respect is in the choice of members for boards of directors. More often than not, he says, they are chosen for their business acumen and social prestige rather than for religious conviction and educational insight. Others are critical of the processes by which Associations test the fitness of prospective members of their staffs for carrying their share of religious leadership.

Such questions are only partially within the scope of this handbook. A group has been commissioned by the Association of Secretaries to make a special study of the development of professional competence in religious leadership. The findings of this study may be expected after the A.O.S. Triennial Conference in May, 1945. In this chapter we are concerned, however, with the in-service experience of both lay and professional leaders. We are interested particularly in presenting concrete examples of ways in which leaders' meetings may contribute toward Christian motivation and management.

A CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP OF LAY LEADERS

Earlier in this book it has been suggested that the genius of the Young Men's Christian Association has consisted to a considerable extent in the way it has succeeded in enlisting Christian laymen for service, study, and worship. The Y.M.C.A. is meant to be far more than an institution that provides facilities; it is to be a fellowship that generates faith and demonstrates brotherhood. Therefore, as a study in Canada recently concluded:

Each Association should seek to build an inner circle of key laymen united by strong Christian convictions and devoted to the work of the Young Men's Christian Association. This fellowship should be carefully developed, every means possible being used to help them clarify and formulate their gospel.⁵⁰

The Christian character of the enterprise should be reflected, of course, in the total work of a committee or board and is not to be measured only by specific recognition of

⁵⁰*The Y.M.C.A. and the Religious Needs of Youth.* Prepared by the Subcommittee on Religious Emphasis of the Young Men's Committee, National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s of Canada. 10 cents. Available through Association Press.

religion in a period of devotions. Some years ago one of the National Board executives stated clearly the way of working that ought to characterize such Association groups:

The pattern of our board and committee meetings should be unique in very practical ways because of the fact that we are a Christian society. Our planning is for persons. The quality of patience shown, the sympathetic provision for representation of interests, the spread of responsibility—all these are tests of the way personal values are upheld. The otherwise ordinary enterprises and activities of the Association may be lifted to the level of religious experience if basic policies sustain this goal and if planning is competent to achieve it. . . .

The quality of religion characteristic of the Association must be a concern of lay persons. . . . As a Christian society we seek to make possible the study, worship and other vital experiences which will lead to a deep understanding and courageous following of Christ. . . . Youth should have the aid of the most daring Christian spirits. It is the privilege of lay boards and committees to provide and to sponsor this sort of religious opportunity. How rich will be the experience of lay persons who share this religious quest with youth and who sponsor its necessity when it may be misunderstood by others!⁵¹

One of the points that came to the surface repeatedly during the extensive Centennial Year deliberations on Y.M.C.A. goals and programs is the need for making the administrative processes of the local Association more democratic—broadening the base of representation, making policy-forming groups more sensitive to the needs and desires of members, avoiding the domination of a few “elder statesmen.” Here, within our own board and committee processes, is a fruitful field for the expression of our Christian emphasis.

DEVOTIONAL SERVICES

Granted a conscious Christian purpose on the part of board and committee members, the right kind of devotional period may be most valuable. Too often “devotional exercises” in such meetings are a mere gesture, a formal part of the agenda not calculated to stir anyone to real devotion. Not infrequently, monthly meetings of Y.M.C.A. boards of

⁵¹“Our Christian Mission,” Jay A. Urice. *Association Forum*, July, 1937.

directors have been conducted with no devotional period of any kind.

On the other hand, some Associations report a long-standing practice of planned devotional periods. The Religious Emphasis Committee of the Chicago Y.M.C.A. sought to improve the practice of its Departments by providing single-sheet mimeographed devotional services for the regular board meetings. Out of this experiment developed a series of similar programs for nation-wide use during the Centennial Year. Sponsored by the National Board's Committee on Christian Emphasis, these services were prepared by nationally known Y.M.C.A. leaders.⁵² The hearty response to this simple plan indicates a widely felt need of local boards of directors for aid in improving the quality of their devotional periods. More than 400 Associations used these services regularly in 1944 and many expressed appreciation of their value.

A devotional period in Y.M.C.A. staff meetings is an almost universal practice, although here too the vitality of the experience varies with the religious concern of those in charge. Where there is a chapel in the building, it is frequently used by the staff at weekly or bi-weekly intervals.

Some Associations go a step farther and provide regular meetings for all employees, professional and non-professional. An Indiana Y.M.C.A. (81) reports that weekly worship services for employees have been a custom for eighteen years. The services are planned by an employees' committee. Attendance of course is optional. Another Association in the same state (90) has a series of weekly orientation meetings each fall for new members of the staff. Maintenance men and women join with office secretaries and new members of the professional staff for informal worship, followed by an interpretation of the Y.M.C.A., local and national, and a discussion of employee problems. In such meetings a genuine Christian fellowship is established, demonstrating the principle advanced by a general secretary that "no employee shall ever be considered as just an employee of the Association, but always as a co-worker in a fellowship, the purpose and methods of which he is expected to share understandingly and with eager sympathy."

⁵²*Appendix D* contains several of these devotional services.

THE EXPERIENCE OF LEADERSHIP 117

Frequently all employees are included in a special Good Friday Service. For some years the New York City Y.M.C.A. has held a city-wide service of this kind. Another large city Association (41) made a special feature this year of a sacred drama staged by an employees' committee.

A few Y.M.C.A.'s conduct services of installation or rededication for lay officers and committees and for staff members. Several services of this nature, developed by Dr. Rolland Schloerb and used particularly by Associations in the Chicago area, are reproduced in *Appendix E*.

RETREATS AND PLANNING CONFERENCES

On the basis of incomplete data, it appears that a fairly large proportion of Y.M.C.A.'s hold some kind of annual conference or retreat for the inner circle of members who carry leadership responsibility. One large Metropolitan Association (84) for sixteen years has held an Annual Spring Retreat, designed for all committeemen and club leaders. This meeting continues through an afternoon and evening and consists largely of inspirational addresses, closing with a communion service.

In some large city Y.M.C.A.'s such a conference is held for a week-end, usually at a distance from the city, and the chief emphasis is upon the religious program of the Association. The New York City Association, for example, brings in a prominent pastor or professor each spring for such an occasion and prepares a mimeographed summary of the conference for general distribution. Another Eastern Association (20) holds an Annual Spiritual Emphasis Conference for a week-end in September and states the purpose as follows:

- (1) It provides for personal growth and inspiration.
- (2) The program is arranged to help those engaged in group leadership and teaching.
- (3) The conference will be helpful to committeemen, officers of clubs, members of boards and councils who are planning program with spiritual emphasis.
- (4) Re-creation which comes from a beautiful setting, good times and good fellowship, is important.

Similar in nature is the laymen's planning conference. This is usually confined to the leaders of a single Association and

is held on a Sunday in the fall of the year. In addition to an inspirational address, there is frequently a discussion on Association problems that sets the direction for the coming year.

Although it is beyond the province of this book to deal with area and state gatherings, it is worthy of note that Annual Council meetings, as well as occasional gatherings for special religious emphasis, often prove to be outstanding experiences of renewal of Christian purpose on the part of lay and professional leaders.

STAFF STUDY AND EVALUATION

The vitality of Christian leadership in the Y.M.C.A. depends not only upon the regular renewal of the devotional life through experiences of worship but upon the stimulus to thought that comes from systematic study of the Christian Gospel and its implications for modern life. The obligation that is thus placed upon secretaries is pointed out cogently by Mr. Urice in an article previously cited:

If laymen are to lead in this phase of the enterprise it is necessary for secretaries to give them a chance to think about and to discuss central problems of religion. The reports that are written for board and committee reading may well deal with fundamental religious questions. Books can be shared and talked about. The speakers who come to board and other meetings should be selected with a view to having religion discussed on a high level and not, as is all too frequent, just another "religious message"! It is well to remind ourselves as secretaries of the necessity for knowing the best religious thought of our times if we are to help others to know it and sponsor its study.

Exact information on the current status of systematic study of religion by local Y.M.C.A. staffs is not available, but it is generally agreed that this is one of the weak spots in the present Association program. Under the pressure of reduced personnel and complex responsibilities, it is all too easy to confine staff gatherings to matters of immediate practical concern. It is not safe to assume that Association secretaries come with a strong background of study of religion as a part of their professional training, nor that summer schools and conferences will supply what is needed by way of "refresher" courses. The plain fact is that many Y.M.C.A. secretaries feel insecure in their own knowledge of Christianity and there-

fore are inadequately prepared to interpret Christian faith to others.

Here and there an Association seeks to meet this need partly by extending the devotional period of staff meetings at certain times so that it becomes an occasion for substantial study of religion. There is an abundance of books that are suited to serious staff study, particularly where individual secretaries are willing to take responsibility one after another for separate chapters, instead of relying on outside leadership. A list of such books adapted to staff study is given here in response to occasional requests for suggestions. A few books on the Bible are included, under the conviction that direct Biblical study may be one of the most fruitful sources of fresh insight and basic understanding.

A SELECTED LIST OF BOOKS FOR STAFF STUDY

- Fosdick, Harry E., *On Being a Real Person*. Harper, 1943. \$2.50. Keen insights into the development of a mature Christian personality.
- Jones, E. Stanley, *The Christ of the American Road*. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1944. \$1.00. Our unique national heritage and its challenge to Christians.
- Knox, John, *The Man Christ Jesus*. Willett and Clark, 1942. \$1.00. A searching but non-technical portrait of Jesus by a New Testament scholar.
- Lyman, Eugene W., *Religion and the Issues of Life*. Association Press, 1943. 50¢. A stimulating study of the basic nature of religion. The last in the valuable series of Hazen Books.
- Steele, Douglas V., *On Beginning from Within*. Harper, 1944. \$1.50. A series of brilliant essays on "the intensification of the life of God in the individual hearts of men." For personal reading or group study.
- Thomas, George F. (editor), *The Vitality of the Christian Tradition*. Harper, 1944. \$3.00. A substantial book by a group of scholars, stating the major insights and values of the Christian tradition, including the relevance of this tradition to modern thought. (See also list on pages 69-70, particularly books by Craig, Hutchinson and Richardson.)

Another means of preparing staff members for leadership with a Christian emphasis is the annual staff retreat. One Association (91) makes it a practice for almost the entire staff to spend several days in June at the Y.M.C.A. camp some miles away, choosing each year some phase of the program for detailed study and evaluation. In 1944, the religious work of the Association was given special consideration. As a basis for discussion problems were posed in advance by branch staffs.

The Religious Education Committee of another Y.M.C.A. (92) recently made a report on "Program Evaluation in Terms of the Purpose of the Association," in which one section deals with objectives for professional and lay leadership. Some of the specific qualifications for Christian leadership listed by this committee are presented here as an illustration of the thinking that is going on in an increasing number of Associations:

The leader should:

- Know, understand, and be personally committed to the basic Christian purpose of the Association.
- Be an active member of some Christian Church.
- Have a well-developed and functioning personal religion.
- Have positive convictions on the basic objects of Christian faith and the ability to show these in a helpful way, with tolerance for the views of others.
- Have the disposition to grow in Christian living and leadership.
- Focus his interest primarily in persons and not in programs and methods.
- Know and be able to use the democratic method in working with a group.
- Seek to render useful service to others.
- Be able to interpret his personal and group experiences, and the current events of the day, in the light of Christian truth and ideals.
- Recognize his responsibility to help bring about a more Christian society through work with his group.
- Have a sense of both the ultimate and the immediate aims that govern his work and be able to interpret these to his group.

A rating scale is prepared on the basis of these and other items and it is proposed that each leader rate himself and be rated by a supervisor. Such a project represents an interesting effort to refine standards for Christian leadership in the Y.M.C.A. and is likely to provide a wholesome stimulus to self-evaluation on the part of both lay and professional workers. Other forms of evaluation on a nation-wide basis may develop out of the study now under way for the A.O.S. Triennial Conference.

At the beginning of the second century of the Young Men's

Christian Association it becomes a major concern of lay leaders that they should have employed officers who are prepared by motivation and training to direct programs with a strong Christian emphasis. This need is of primary importance if the Association Movement is to continue to pioneer. Dr. Stewart G. Cole, himself an active layman in the Y.M.C.A., closed a recent critical analysis of Association strategy on this note:

If a pioneering program along these several lines were included in the reappraisal plan of the Association, it should have to take seriously the in-service reorientation of its professional leaders. As goes the thinking and planning of the local executive directors, so goes the Y.M.C.A. A fresh job-analysis of the fundamentals of Association strategy by its secretaries and boards of directors would provide the most stimulating and recreative experience conceivable. . . . This capacity to weigh new issues and embrace new frontiers of social and spiritual import remains the distinctive quality of leadership in the Young Men's Christian Association.⁵³

⁵³"The Religious Strategy of the Y.M.C.A.," Stewart G. Cole. *Association Forum*, January-February, 1943.

CHAPTER XII

SEEING THE PROGRAM WHOLE

THROUGHOUT PART II of this handbook we have sought to review faithfully what Y.M.C.A.'s actually are doing by way of Christian emphasis, without either minimizing or idealizing the present situation. Those who are interested in forming a judgment about the adequacy, from the religious standpoint, of the Y.M.C.A. Movement in this country will find here a body of information of considerable aid in their evaluation.

The writer's own judgment, expressed in a few sentences, is this: Y.M.C.A.'s across the country are giving more attention to Christian emphasis in their programs than is commonly realized; yet, measured by standards of what a Young Men's Christian Association might be, in light of the essential genius of this Movement, most Associations fall far short. Expressions of Christian purpose in Y.M.C.A.'s tend to be sporadic and limited to certain phases of the program. Much depends upon whether or not one or two leaders are present who take the Christian purpose of the Association very seriously and try to translate it in some detail into all activities and relationships. On the part of most lay and professional leaders there is a genuine desire to strengthen the Association's Christian emphasis. This desire, if clarified and directed into appropriate channels, may make the Y.M.C.A.'s of America a far more effective religious force within the next decade.

Checking the review of Part II against the standards developed in Part I,⁵⁴ one gap is particularly apparent: much too little attention has been given to ways in which a Y.M.C.A.'s Christian emphasis may be expressed through projects of service and action. Y.M.C.A.'s have worked much harder at "developing Christian personality" than at the counterpart

⁵⁴See particularly pp. 24-25.

of their stated purpose, "building a Christian society." To be specific, few reports are at hand of projects of community service and World Service that are seen clearly as expressions of an Association's Christian emphasis. Likewise, comparatively few Y.M.C.A.'s have reported as part of their Christian emphasis the promotion of searching studies of local and national social situations—political, economic, racial—and the stimulation of members to vigorous action as Christians in helping to bring about desirable social changes.

In part, this gap is due to limitations in our method of gathering information for this study. Unless World Service, citizenship education, and similar items are specified in a letter of inquiry, many Associations will not think of reporting them as part of their Christian emphasis. Furthermore, we know that a number of Y.M.C.A.'s are engaged actively in such projects as World Service education and giving, youth-and-government assemblies, and public affairs education. A considerable body of documentation of such activities is now at hand.⁵⁵ But even here the connection between social service or action and Christian purpose is not always clearly recognized. We still tend to put our "religious work" in a separate compartment instead of regarding the Christian purpose of our Associations as the central motivation for the entire program. It is the testimony of history that, when the Christian message for the individual and the world is proclaimed with all its original meaning, changes take place inevitably in social relationships.

"Service" has been the watchword of lay leaders in the Y.M.C.A. They give hours of time without stint and contribute generously to the local and World Service budgets. For many this is a conscious expression of their Christian interest in youth. This experience of service might well be given clearer recognition as an important part of the Y.M.C.A.'s Christian emphasis. Also it could be directed into channels of greater social significance. Interest in World Service, now expressed too often only in terms of money-raising, might be expanded into a thorough-going concern for the reconstruction of large portions of the earth now burdened with pov-

⁵⁵*Educating for Civic Responsibility*, Paul M. Limbert, Association Press, 1941. \$1.25.

National Council Bulletin Supplements 6 and 8.

erty, ignorance, and strife. Interest in community service similarly might develop into a determination to remove some of the causes of ill-health and delinquency. The expression of Christian service in the community, for example, often stops short at racial lines; many Y.M.C.A.'s fail to meet the obvious needs of Negro youth because of reluctance to run counter to the customs and prejudices of the community.

This brief excursion into evaluation is made to avoid any tendency toward complacency regarding the present status of Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A. program. This study will fail to a large extent in its purpose unless it spurs local Associations to re-examine all the activities and relationships within their control and to recognize humbly their shortcomings in light of what it really means to be a *Christian* association of and for young men.

TWENTY-FIVE SPECIFIC EXPRESSIONS OF CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS

It would be impossible to confine the Christian emphasis in Y.M.C.A.'s to any list of specific items, because so much depends on the quality of the activity and the spirit of the relationship. Yet such a list may be a convenient aid to any local Association in determining where it now stands so far as both explicit and implicit expressions of Christian purpose are concerned. The twenty-five items that follow represent in a sense a summary of Part II of this handbook. Page references are given so that more detailed suggestions for program can be located readily.

1. Stress on the Christian purpose of the Y.M.C.A. in membership recruiting and interpretation (pp. 22, 53-55).
2. Expression of a Christian concern for persons in planned interviews and informal contacts with individuals (pp. 21, 45-57).
3. A Christian emphasis, both implicit and explicit, in the program of organized groups of boys and young men (pp. 20, 31-44).
4. Development of the total camping program with conscious regard to Christian values (pp. 42-43).
5. Encouragement of and guidance in private prayer and devotional reading (pp. 40, 50, 52-53).

6. Promotion of church attendance and affiliation (pp. 84-86).
7. Some systematic study of religion, including the Bible, in the regular program of Hi-Y Clubs and other organized groups (pp. 58-70).
8. Special lectures or discussions on religion at certain periods of the year (pp. 60-69).
9. Forums and small group discussions on the application of Christian principles to everyday social relationships, to international and interracial relations, and to other social problems (pp. 64-69).
10. Projects of community service and World Service as a conscious expression of Christian social concern (pp. 122-124).
11. Observance of special seasons of the Christian year, such as Christmas, Holy Week, Easter (pp. 71-80).
12. Availability of good literature on religious subjects (pp. 40, 49-50, 69-70, 119).
13. Occasional use of the radio for a religious message under Y.M.C.A. auspices (pp. 99-100).
14. Increasing use of films and recordings with religious content as an aid to instruction and worship (pp. 98-104).
15. The use of pictures, displays, and other symbols relating to religion, in the lobby and other parts of the building (pp. 98, 105-106).
16. Provision of a chapel or quiet room especially appropriate for personal and group meditation (pp. 106-112).
17. Acceptance of a share of responsibility for Christian emphasis by every member of the staff, professional and non-professional (pp. 113-121).
18. Devotional periods in board, staff, and committee meetings (pp. 115-117).
19. Occasional gatherings of all volunteer leaders and employed officers for worship and for consideration of the Association's Christian emphasis (pp. 116-121).
20. Provision for special study of religion and the Y.M.C.A.'s Christian emphasis in staff meetings and retreats (pp. 117-121).
21. Participation in the council of churches or ministerial association and in the co-operative Protestant projects of the community (pp. 82, 89-92).

22. Regular consultation with church leaders regarding the Y.M.C.A.'s religious program, including various kinds of services to the churches (pp. 82-83, 89-96).

23. Sponsoring occasional religious programs for grade-school and high-school youth, in consultation with principals and teachers (pp. 92-96).

24. Occasional meetings with parents to interpret the Christian purpose of the Association and its bearing on home life (pp. 65, 81).

25. A Committee on Christian Emphasis or its equivalent.

A COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS

Item 25 leads to one final consideration—the importance of providing in every Association for a committee that will give continuing thought and guidance to the whole matter of Christian emphasis.

A large proportion of Y.M.C.A.'s already have such a committee, according to incomplete information at hand. The titles usually given are: Committee on Christian Emphasis, Committee on Religious Emphasis, Committee on Religious Work, Religious Education Committee. Most of the projects described in Chapters VI-IX were under the sponsorship of such committees.

The functions of such a committee would seem to be at least three:

(1) To see that certain specifically religious projects—study groups, special lectures, Holy Week services, etc.—are carried out either directly under its own auspices or through other channels.

(2) To review in turn each department of the general program of the Association—boys' work, physical education, membership, etc.—to see to what extent a Christian emphasis pervades all activities and relationships.

(3) To work out ways of relating the Y.M.C.A. effectively to the Protestant churches of the community.

This should be a standing committee, reporting directly to the Board of Directors or Committee of Management. It should include persons who represent the varied interests and age-groups of the Association. Members should be chosen, of course, for their definite religious interest, but there should be room for divergent points of view on theology and method.

This committee will probably feel the need of continued study of Christian faith on their own part and might use some of the books suggested earlier for staff study.⁵⁶

This handbook has been written particularly for such local committees. It is designed both for their general orientation to the current thinking and practice of the Y.M.C.A. Movement regarding Christian emphasis and as a practical guide to the development of a local program. One of the first steps of the committee may be to promote the study of this handbook by other committeemen and by the staff.

Committees on Christian Emphasis in a few Associations have worked out statements of policy and recommendations for procedure and have distributed them in mimeographed form. The Detroit Y.M.C.A. has not only developed such a document but each year compiles a report of the way each branch has carried out a religious emphasis in its program. Tangible documents and reports of this kind may give a sense of direction to the whole Association.

Any committee or individual who starts out to evaluate the Christian emphasis in a Y.M.C.A.'s program must be prepared to face deep-rooted difficulties. Judson J. McKim wrote some years ago:

Must we not confess one to the other that this art of keeping the conquering Christ regnant in our own lives and activities and in the center of our Association programs presents the most serious and baffling task confronting us?⁵⁷

In preparation for a retreat recently, members of the staff of one of our well-established Y.M.C.A.'s (91) stated some of the problems and difficulties to be faced in giving religion its rightful place in the Association program:

- Professional and lay leaders need to develop a much stronger conviction as to the importance of a specific religious emphasis in the program and a determination to do something about it.
- We seem too much impressed with statistical reports, membership income, and volume of service to spend enough time to make the right kind of contribution to individuals.

⁵⁶P. 119.

⁵⁷Judson J. McKim, *Some Basic Concepts Underlying the Religious Program of the Y.M.C.A.*, 1931.

- The majority of members look upon the Y.M.C.A. as a social-athletic organization and we have failed to bring them an understanding of the basic purpose of the Association.
- Members differ in forms of worship and religious practices. There are many Roman Catholics and Jews.
- The major problem is that able men are too busy to think about religious emphasis.

Such a realistic appraisal of the situation is sobering, particularly in view of the tremendous demands that will be made upon religious faith in the years immediately ahead. Ample evidence has been presented in this book, however, to demonstrate that even a small group of men who believe deeply in the Christian mission of the Y.M.C.A. and who are stirred by the urgent needs of the times, can help their Association to become a mighty source of spiritual power for the development of Christian personality and the building of a Christian society.

APPENDIX A

AFFIRMATIONS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

(This statement was approved by the National Intercollegiate Christian Council, June 29-July 6, 1944, as an affirmation of Christian faith generally accepted by members of Student Christian Associations.)

To God alone we owe supreme loyalty and devotion. It is only when we give ourselves unreservedly to doing his will that we attain our full stature as human beings.

God is the Creator of our orderly universe and works through his laws in fulfilling his purpose in human history and in the lives of individuals.

Despite the constant setbacks in finding God's way for our lives, we know that it is discoverable. When we glimpse the creative, harmonious relationship possible with God and our fellows, we know him to be our Father and they our brothers, in a deeply personal and intimate way.

The quality and not the length of one's life is what is important. We face the threat of death which hovers over every human being with the knowledge that persons are permanently valuable because they are children of God, that their worth comes from God and is sustained by him, beyond the span of individual, physical life.

God revealed in Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith. The revelation of God which is in all of life is consummated in Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus' understanding of man's true relation to God, as expressed in his life, his teaching, and in his unswerving devotion to God, even to the Cross, is the basis of our knowledge of God's will. The Christ of faith is the living God at work in human life, whom we apprehend as revealed in Jesus of Nazareth. In Jesus Christ we see God as the Father of all men who reconciles the world to himself through his suffering and forgiving love.

The Church is the unity of fellow Christians, transcending all boundaries of conflict. It is the privilege and responsibility of Christians to work in one's individual church toward the realization of the world community of Christians in the Church.

The Bible gives us the most complete record of God's and man's search for each other. Prayerful study of it is one of the most direct ways of discovering his way for us.

Man is made in the image of God, yet is continually tempted to use his human freedom to set up objects of lesser loyalty that take the place of God. He is a finite creature who tends often to set up his own limited perspectives as infinite and to claim God's sanction for his own partial efforts. Christianity's realistic view of human nature, recognizing the constant tension between

what man is and what he might be, avoids both sentimentality and cynicism.

All men are equally valuable in the sight of God. Their abilities and achievements differ, but God intends that the potentialities of every person be developed as far as is possible, in keeping with the good of the community. To thwart the growth of any person, and therefore that of the community, is an affront to God.

Because of his self-centeredness and weakness and because of the unchristian organization of society, man continually fails to work with God according to his purposes. Christian faith impels us to follow him in our personal lives and to establish community practices in accordance with his way for men. It is our consuming desire to achieve a society in which the maximum opportunity for freedom in fellowship will be realized. Such a society would provide for each individual and family the economic essentials for adequate food, decent homes, medical care, equal educational opportunities and leisure for personal growth. Its government would derive from the consent of the governed. It would recognize no barriers of race, creed, or color.

The kingdom of God, in which his will governs the total life of man, sets the direction toward which Christians work in developing the good society. No specific organization of society will ever coincide with the kingdom of God, because his relationship with man is not static, but growing and creative. God will lead men to awareness of new aspects of his purpose more rapidly than they can fulfill it in their practice. Although the kingdom of God always lies beyond the possibility of achievement, it is the responsibility of Christians to utilize every opportunity to bring the practice of our common life under the domination of God's way. Among the channels which Christians use in fulfilling his purpose in society are personal relationships, the home, the Church, other community agencies, labor organizations, political action and their vocations.

The war is the climax of evil which results from materialism, selfishness, and inadequate international government. We are involved in the common guilt and tragedy of war. Some of us feel we cannot participate in it because it denies our Christian beliefs. Others feel that we must participate directly or indirectly in military efforts to combat the forces which claim to be new faiths for men denying the universal and eternal values of Christian faith. Either position involves a choice in which evil cannot be avoided, for both result in sufferings and loss of life for many people.

New religious insight comes when we have acted upon the insights previously given us. Spiritual dryness is the result of our failure to act upon God's commands for us. The spirit of God is at work in individuals and groups impelling us to find ourselves in him.

APPENDIX B

REALIZING THE CHRISTIAN PURPOSES OF THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

(Suggestions for discussion in boards and other groups on ways to strengthen the spiritual aspects of the Association's program. Issued by Committee on Christian Emphasis and Method, 1942.)

I. Numerous Specific Activities Are Commonly Associated with Christian Living. How Many of These Can We Promote in This Association, and in What Ways?

1. Services of worship.
2. Small groups to study the Bible. Breakfast groups. Residence-hall groups.
3. Subjects of religious content introduced in the regular programs of Hi-Y, Phalanx, Y's Men's Clubs, forums, etc.
4. Small groups which sing religious music.
5. Small groups to study specific problems, such as the application of Christian principles to family life, international and interracial relations, wartime perplexities, etc.
6. Co-operation with other groups in the community in promoting series of lectures on Church history, the fundamentals of religious living, interfaith conferences.
7. Observances of special seasons of the Christian Year, such as Christmas, Easter, Holy Week.
8. Encouragement and guidance in daily devotional reading.
9. Encouragement of the reading of good books on religious subjects.
10. Devotional periods in board, staff, and committee meetings.
11. The use of the Lord's Prayer as a unifying influence in board meetings.
12. Encouragement and guidance of members in finding a church or synagogue home.
13. Co-operation with local churches.
14. Inviting ministers, rabbis and priests to attend board meetings.
15. Electing a minister a member of the board of directors.

II. What Attitudes and Qualities Should Characterize All Y.M.-C.A. Activities So That They May Promote the Christian Way of Life?

Specifically, when is a club, or a party, or a game, or a forum conducted in a Christian manner? When are its participants growing in Christian character?

1. As participants grow in their REVERENCE FOR GOD.
2. As they grow in their RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUALS. As they put

- human values above winning, above financial profit, above success.
3. As they grow in their acceptance of RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE GOOD OF THE WHOLE ENTERPRISE. Members may join the Y.M.C.A. to get something, but they should grow in their ability to give something.
 4. As they grow in their ability to IDENTIFY THE PRINCIPLES that make their activity satisfying, and that make it promote the Christian way of living.
 5. Other suggestions. . . .

III. How Can We Inject These Qualities Into Our Entire Program and Work?

1. By staff and board conferences in which they are emphasized.
2. By cultivating these attitudes in ourselves as responsible leaders in the Association.
3. By printing them on our literature.
4. By a method of enlisting and receiving members that emphasizes them.
5. By emphasizing them in interviews and in counseling.
6. By periodically testing our work by these standards.
7. By an annual meeting of all committee chairmen and members, in which these aims are magnified.
8. By an annual installation service in which members of committees commit themselves to these aims.
9. By what other ways?

APPENDIX C

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

Over a period of years a number of efforts have been made to develop a set of standards by which the Christian quality of a Y.M.C.A. program can be measured. Some of these lists of criteria have been developed by individual leaders; others are the result of commission study. Five of the most widely used statements of this kind are quoted in this appendix, together with a Statement of Purpose from the 1941 Boys' Workers' Assembly. Each of these approaches has its value, especially when a local staff takes the time to examine the set of criteria carefully and to work out a plan for using it in their own process of evaluation.

These existing statements have been taken into account in the development of "Standards for the Development of a Significant Christian Emphasis in Y.M.C.A. Program" in this handbook. A comparison of the suggestions for evaluation in this book with the lists of criteria reproduced in this appendix will show a number of similarities. Our approach may be characterized as follows:

1. Our analysis is limited to the *Christian* heritage and outlook; we do not attempt to develop standards for "religious" experience in a broad sense.
2. We give attention to the specific *content* of the term "Christian," as a foundation for any application to personal growth or group experience. ("What It Means to Be a Christian," pp. 18-19.)
3. We seek to state criteria functionally in terms of *Y.M.C.A. program*, relating these standards specifically to varying kinds of relationships and activities found in Y.M.C.A.'s. ("How to Judge the Christian Quality of an Association Program," pp. 20-23.)
4. We have developed also a basis for judging the Christian quality of *group experience*, relating our questions to the actual operation of a boys' club. ("Group Experience of Christian Quality," pp. 32-36.)
5. We have listed by way of summary and for purposes of local evaluation "Twenty-five Specific Expressions of Christian Emphasis." (Pp. 124-126.)

BASIC EXPERIENCES FOR RELIGIOUS GROWTH
ERNEST J. CHAVE

(From address at Assembly of Y.M.C.A. Workers with Boys, 1941.)

1. Growth of sense of worth.
2. Development of social sensitivity.
3. Growth of appreciation for the universe, its laws and resources.
4. Increasing discrimination in values with readiness to sacrifice lesser for greater gains.
5. Growth in sense of responsibility and accountability.
6. Sense of need for co-operation and fellowship for achievement of higher values.
7. Recognition that the quest for truth and realization of ideals is an endless pursuit.
8. Gradual integration of experiences and development of working philosophy based upon proved values.
9. Development of suitable language, symbols, and institutional relationships to express these growing ideas, values and attitudes.
10. Observance of special times and ceremonies for keeping sensitive to these higher values.

BASIC TESTS OF Y.M.C.A. WORK FOR BOYS

(From report of Commission on the Functions of Laymen in the Boys' Work of the Y.M.C.A., Rome A. Betts, Chairman, Assembly of Y.M.C.A. Workers with Boys, 1941.)

1. Will the activity contribute to making a boy conscious of the rights and privileges of other boys in the group?
2. Does it contain in it anywhere the opportunity of performing service for others, either members of groups or outside groups?
3. Does it provide opportunity for a better understanding of boys

134 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

differing from himself either within the group or in the community?

4. Does it make possible group decisions democratically arrived at?
5. In our total impact on any boy's life do we endeavor at some point to awaken in him a consciousness of his belonging to the whole human family?
6. Does it contribute toward the individual boy's own essential growth, *i.e.*, does it provide him the satisfactions of some accomplishment either physical, mental or spiritual in company with the others belonging to the group and in no sense at their expense?
7. Will it contribute to the boy's knowledge and acceptance of personal standards of right and wrong?
8. Do we insist that every leader of whatever group shall accept the foregoing principles as goals toward which he and his group must strive and which in the long run will determine the degree of success he has achieved as a leader?

CRITERIA OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

HEDLEY S. DIMOCK

(From "Religious Objectives in the Y.M.C.A.," *Religious Education*, July-August, 1942.)

1. Does he increasingly recognize the supreme worth of persons?
2. Does he increasingly accept responsibility for achieving a Christian society characterized by brotherhood, democracy, social justice, and peace, and actively co-operate with others toward this end?
3. Does he increasingly identify and actively resist the "forces of evil?"
4. Is he developing more personal, articulate, mature, and systematic concepts about religion in terms of contemporary knowledge and needs?
5. Is the integrity and "wholeness" of his personality being recognized and advanced?
6. Is he becoming more aware of wider and deeper meanings in experience?
7. Does he increasingly exhibit an intelligent, open-minded, and inquiring attitude in the discovery and pursuit of worthy ends?
8. Is he growing in the consciousness of his relationship to the cosmic reality that Christians interpret as God?

CRITERIA OF THE RELIGIOUS FACTOR IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

(Criteria used by the Rochester, N. Y., Y.M.C.A. adapted from a list developed some years ago under the leadership of Robert Seneca Smith.)

1. In carrying on the activity, are persons respected?
2. Does the activity bind the group together into a co-operative human enterprise?
3. Does the activity call forth thinking about fundamental problems involved?
4. Does the activity lead on into larger activities?
5. Does the total activity, that is, action, thought and criticism, foster in the group a progressive development of Christ-like character?

6. Does the activity develop the desire and the ability to participate constructively in the building of a better social order throughout the world, an order which embodies the ideal of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man?
7. Does the activity develop an understanding and appreciation of the personality and teaching of Jesus, and stimulate the individual to practice Christ's way of living?
8. Does the activity develop a consciousness of God as a reality in human experience, and does it help to give a Christian interpretation of God and the universe?

AREAS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

(Developed by the Brooklyn-Queens Y.M.C.A. under the leadership of Winthrop G. Martin as an aid in planning and evaluating programs. "Christian Emphasis Can Be Practical," *Association Forum*, March-April, 1944.)

1. Experiences in developing a closer relationship to God.
2. Experiences in becoming better acquainted with the Bible in order to give added meaning to all other experiences.
3. Experiences in personal growth toward higher values.
4. The development of concern for the community—local, national, world (social sensitivity).
5. Experiences in serving others.
6. Experiences in developing good will.
7. Experiences in accepting responsibility in constructive activity and leadership, according to experience and ability.
8. Experiences in co-operative achievement.
9. More enriching friendship experience.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

(Adopted by the 1944 Assembly of Y.M.C.A. Workers with Boys from report of a Workshop on Purpose and Program, John Lehman, Chairman.)

Building upon the central Christian purpose of the Y.M.C.A. and upon the needs of boys, the Y.M.C.A. seeks in its program to help boys:

1. Grow physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially.
2. Learn and practice habits of health and physical fitness, and develop a variety of physical skills.
3. Express their interest and abilities through a variety of leisure-time activities.
4. Be capable of and willing to make decisions, and to accept responsibilities for those decisions.
5. Develop personal standards of right and wrong, based on an understanding and acceptance of Christian values.
6. Give serious consideration to discovering their place in the world of work.
7. Respect the rights and privileges of others.
8. Find happiness in serving others.
9. Understand, appreciate, and work with persons who differ from themselves as to race, nationality, religion, economic or social status.

136 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

10. Understand and accept their responsibilities as members of family groups.
11. Develop natural and wholesome attitudes toward boy-girl relationships.
12. Take part in group experience in which decisions are democratically arrived at.
13. Learn and accept the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship in their groups and communities.
14. Think of themselves as being world citizens—members of the whole human family.
15. Become interested in and desire to understand current affairs.
16. Participate in services of worship that are carefully planned and spiritually uplifting.
17. Grow in their love of truth, beauty, and goodness.
18. Build and accept a philosophy of life recognizing God as the creative and controlling power greater and beyond themselves.

APPENDIX D

DEVOTIONAL SERVICES FOR BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

(Three in a series of monthly services for nationwide use by boards and committees, sponsored by the Committee on Christian Emphasis and Method.)

MEN OF GOD

A Devotional Service, February, 1944

(All standing)

Leader: While to receptive minds God speaks through nature, his work with mankind must chiefly be wrought through men. Through prophets and priests he has everywhere sought to make himself known and his way of life understood. These failing in the form of a man, he came to demonstrate himself in the arena of human life. Since then the continuance of this convincing method has rested upon those followers of Jesus whose ordinary powers have become incandescent because of their willingness to be charged with his spirit and power.

God spoke to our leaders in the past and out of mediocrity they became great, even as did Abraham, Moses and Joshua.

Today, as Association men, God's kingdom waits upon us. Humble and weak though we be, if our daily lives can be but lived under the vivid control of God, we too shall become incandescent, and by our way of life shall add to the spreading light of his kingdom among men.

RESPONSIVE READING

Leader: For the great leaders whom God has raised up for us, we give thanks.

Response: They were unknown among us until God spoke to them and they did hear and answer.

Leader: For their wisdom and vision we give thanks.

Response: *They yielded their lives to God, and he gave them knowledge and great power.*

Prayer (In unison)

For the humble men of Galilee, even as for the learned Paul, we give thee thanks, O God; for the men of our Movement not known to us by name, as for those who have been known as our leaders, we are grateful to thee. And now, in this great day, O God of Love and Power, quicken in each one of us that willingness and desire to serve Thee which shall enable thee to fill us to our full capacity with thy spirit, so that we shall truly walk as children of Light wherever we may be. Create anew from amongst us great men who shall lead us in the full accomplishment of thy purpose for this Movement, in the spirit of Christ. Amen.

(Prepared by Frank S. Bayley, past president of the National Council.)

ENTERING THE SECOND CENTURY

June, 1944

(All standing)

Leader: During this month the Y.M.C.A. Movement enters the second century of its life. It receives its directives for the future from the directions of its past, and from the spirit of its founders and leaders during a hundred years of world-wide service.

UNISON READING:

Now praise we great and famous men,
The fathers, named in story;
And praise the Lord who now as then
Reveals in man his glory.

Praise we the peaceful men of skill
Who builded homes of beauty,
And rich in art, made richer still
The brotherhood of duty.

(W. G. Tarrant)

RESPONSIVE SERVICE

Leader: And although by their faith they all won God's approval, none of them received the fulfillment of his promise; for God had provided for us something better, so that apart from us they were not to be perfected. (Hebrews 11:39-40)

Response: *Therefore, surrounded as we are by such a vast cloud of witnesses, let us fling aside every encumbrance and the sin that so readily entangles our feet. And let us run with patient*

endurance the race that lies before us, simply fixing our gaze upon Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

Leader: Greater things than these shall ye do.

(John 14:12)

Response: And he hath appointed some in order fully to equip his people for the work of serving till we all arrive at mature manhood and the stature of full-grown men in Christ.

(Ephesians 4:11-13, in part)

Prayer (In unison)

Master divine, we thank thee for landmarks passed and new vistas opening ahead; for new hope and new inspiration, new national awakening, and new desire to serve our country, our world and our time. We thank thee that to those who love thee, the best is ever yet to be: that if we abide in thee we can never grow old, for thou, Our Master, art eternally young. Save us from all weariness of soul, all old age of the spirit that we may with thee press on to the fullness of life as it is in Jesus. Amen.

(J. S. Hoyland—amended)

(Prepared by Thomas W. Graham, Dean of Oberlin Theological Seminary and Chairman of the Centennial Committee.)

YOUTH AND EDUCATION

September, 1944

(All rise and remain standing)

Leader: This is the month when children and youth are returning to school and college. Under the tragic conditions of war, the normal schedule has been disarranged for many. Thousands are in the armed forces and cannot return to school. It is nevertheless appropriate to center our thought and prayer upon children and youth and their education.

Prayer (In unison): "We implore thy blessing, O God, on all the men and women who teach children and youth, for they are the potent friends and helpers of our homes. Into their hands, we daily commit the dearest that we have, and as they make our children, so shall future years see them. Grant them an abiding consciousness that they are co-workers with thee, thou great teacher of humanity, and that thou hast charged them with the holy duty of bringing forth from the budding life of the young the mysterious stores of character and ability which thou hast hidden in them. . . . We remember with gratitude to thee the godly teachers of our own youth who won our hearts to higher purposes by the sacred contagion of their life. May the strength and beauty of Christ-like service still be plainly wrought in the lives of their successors. Amen." (Walter Rauschenbusch, *Prayers of the Social Awakening*).

"O everlasting God, bless, we beseech thee, the boys and girls of our schools; to the end that they may be truthful, pure, obedient, and ready to do their duty. . . . O Lord Jesus Christ, . . . we pray thee to pour thy spirit upon the pupils and students of all nations; that they may consecrate themselves to thy service, even as thou for their sakes did consecrate thyself: and so, being joined together by their common faith and obedience, they may come more perfectly to love and understand one another. Amen."

(*A Book of Prayer for Students*)

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

Leader: Let us make the injunctions in the letters to Timothy our hopes and aspirations for the children and youth in our schools and colleges:

"Model yourself on the sound instruction you have had in the faith and love of Christ Jesus. Keep the great securities of your faith intact, by aid of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us. Hold you to what you have been taught, hold to your convictions. Be strong in the grace of Christ Jesus. Shun the lusts of youth and aim at integrity, faith, love and peace in the company of those who invoke the Lord out of a pure heart. Let no one slight you because you are a youth, but set the believers an example of speech, behavior, love, faith and purity. Join the ranks of those who bear suffering, like a loyal soldier of Christ Jesus."

(II Timothy, 1:13-14; 3:14, 2:1; 22; I Timothy 4:12;
II Timothy 2:3. Moffatt)

Closing Prayer (In unison): "O God, Thou knowest what powers for love and for service thou has set in the souls of our youth. Thou knowest every possibility of perfect manhood which lieth there asleep. Take into thy rich storehouse every impulse, every high ideal, every right faculty, every capacity for love that is within them. Amen."

(Adapted from J. S. Hoyland, *A Book of Prayers for Youth*)

(Prepared by Harrison S. Elliott, Chairman of the National Boys' Work Committee.)

APPENDIX E

SERVICES OF INSTALLATION AND DEDICATION

(Prepared by Rolland W. Schloerb for use by the Chicago Y.M.C.A.)
INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

Leader: As a part of a world-wide movement whose aim is to build Christian character and a Christian society, we rejoice in the opportunity of sharing in the high purposes of the Young Men's Christian Association. To this end we accept the task committed to us and affirm anew the goals which shall guide us during the coming year.

Board of Directors: It is our purpose as members of the Board of Directors to give of our best thought in molding the policies of this Association, to uphold and support those who give their time to its work, and to conduct its business in harmony with its highest aims.

Staff Members: It is our purpose as members of the staff to keep before us the needs of those whom we serve, to allow no routine to dim our interest in people, to strive for proficiency in our profession, and to grow in our ability to serve the community in which we live.

Committee Chairmen and Members: It is our purpose as chairmen and members of committees to give of our time in service, to share in the planning of activities, to endeavor to learn as well as to teach, and to bring our best thought to the accomplishment of these tasks.

All: Together we commit ourselves to the aims which unite us: to grow in reverence for the Source of all life, to learn to respect the rights and needs of other people, to endeavor to accept responsibility for the common good, and to do to others as we would that they should do to us.

PRAYER

Hymn—"Faith of Our Fathers"

Closing Sentences (in unison)

Let us join hands with all who labor to lay foundations for the city of our dreams, wherein all souls shall find joy and peace.

Remembering the excellence of things that have been, let us move forward with new courage, hope and vision to nobler things yet to be. Amen.

SERVICE OF REDEDICATION (CENTENNIAL)

Leader: Standing on the threshold of a new century of service, the spirit of our founders and the need of our world summon us to go forward together under the guidance of our common purpose.

We of the Young Men's Christian Association of Chicago are united in the basic objective "to aid in the development of Christian standards of living, conduct, and life purpose in our members and constituency."

In the attainment of this goal we seek "to promote the physical, mental, and spiritual welfare of persons and to emphasize reverence for God, responsibility for the common good, respect for personality, and the application of the Golden Rule in human relationships."

To this time of rededication we welcome those who have special responsibility in carrying forward the work of this Association. As each adds his strength to our common life, our Association can fulfill its purposes among us.

(Each group will stand in turn, and remain standing until the end of the service. The responses will be read by all present.)

Leader: The officers and members of youth groups will stand.....

You who represent ——— boys and girls in ——— clubs in grade schools and high schools bring to us the vigor and vision of youth.

Response: We summon you anew "to seek happy, loving ways of living with yourselves, your families, your neighborhood friends, and your schoolmates; to find out by wise practice how to live and to create a friendly world; and to create, maintain, and extend throughout the home, the school and community high standards of Christian character."

Leader: All volunteer leaders and committeemen and women will stand.....

You who represent ——— volunteer leaders and committee men and women in this Association are a part of a large reservoir of service from which our Movement has enriched many lives.

Response: We summon you this night to give your best thought and to share your deepest experiences in realizing the goal to produce responsible citizens, propelled by the highest and most unselfish Christian purposes.

Leader: All members of boards of directors will stand.....

You who represent ——— members of ——— Boards of Directors carry heavy responsibility in molding the policies and making decisions that give direction to our work at home and abroad.

Response: We summon you at the opening of this new century to give your earnest thought in choosing the policies of our fellowship, in upholding and supporting those who give their full time to its work, and in conducting its business in harmony with our highest aims.

Leader: All members of the staff will stand.....

You who represent ——— members on the staff of the Chicago Young Men's Christian Association are set apart through your

vocational choice to exercise wise leadership in carrying on our work.

Response: We summon you to be worthy of the honored heritage which is yours as secretaries in this Christian Association, and to grow in ability to serve well the people entrusted to your care.

Leader: Every one will stand for the closing period of rededication.....

Together we perform an act of rededication as unitedly we move into a new century of need and opportunity.

In a world that needs the spirit of comradeship in shared tasks.

Response: We dedicate ourselves to cultivate good fellowship in work and in play, in our buildings and in our community.

Leader: In a world that demands clear minds and unselfish hearts.

Response: We dedicate ourselves to keep better informed upon subjects of immediate civic, and economic, and social interest.

Leader: In a world that is struggling toward a more just order between races and nations.

Response: We dedicate ourselves to encourage righteousness and justice in civic and international affairs.

Leader: In a world that greatly needs persons strong in body and mind, and spirit.

Response: We dedicate ourselves to seek healthy bodies, growing minds, and unselfish spirits for ourselves and all men everywhere.

All:

O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine.

Closing sentences (Read by all):

Grateful for the past, aware of the present, let us build for the future. And may God Almighty who has given us the will to do these things grant us also the strength and power to perform them. Amen.

INSTALLATION OF CLUB OFFICERS

Coming to this time, when again we entrust the leadership of the ——— Club to new officers, and when we call upon them faithfully to devote themselves to fulfill their responsibilities, we shall use an ancient and treasured symbol in this act of installation.

We shall use the symbol of light. This light shall represent for us the living spirit that has endured through the ages—a spirit that has been kept alive as a flame that has never been put out.

As you come forward in turn to receive light for your candle, you are invited to accept the duties to which your office calls you.

President. The light of this candle which you have received is a symbol of the confidence that your fellow-members have placed in you. May you be given strength during this year to carry forward the highest ideals of this club. This gavel is an emblem of the leadership entrusted to you. It is your privilege as well as responsibility to make this club useful in a time when its fellowship and work are most needed.

Vice President. The light of the candle which you have received is a symbol of the spirit which we trust will guide you as you work with the president, and as you aim to provide programs which will direct and guide the thoughts of the club when its members are together each month.

Second Vice President. To you as second vice president has come this light which summons you to your task of providing the social life of the group.

Secretary. As you the secretary have received the light of this candle you are invited to accept the task of the recording of the work and events of the organization.

Treasurer. As you the treasurer receive this light you are called to the duty of administering the financial affairs of the club in co-operation with the president and the other officers.

Membership Chairman. This light summons you as membership chairman to the important work of interesting new people in joining the club and in developing better acquaintance among its members.

House Chairman. This light is a reminder to you as house chairman that you, like a good hostess in a home, will plan our meals and provide pleasant surroundings for our meetings.

Philanthropic and Finance Chairman. To you as philanthropic and finance chairman comes this light, symbolizing the spirit of service by which the club seeks to make contributions to worthy and needy enterprises.

As these officers lift high their candles, may we all unite with them in a prayer of dedication for the new year.

O God, who hast enriched our lives by the faithfulness of those who have served this club in past years, and by the many whose lives have been touched by its helpful outreach, we thank thee for the blessings of the past and for the hope of the future. We pray thy guidance upon those who are to lead us during this year, and together we dedicate ourselves to be loyal to our highest purposes. Amen.

SERVICES OF DEDICATION OF A CAMP

Leader: Here in God's kingdom of the out-of-doors, amid the shelter of trees and by the cool waters of a lake, we unite in this act of dedication.

In grateful remembrance of one whose youthful years were filled with joyous hours spent with good comrades among na-

144 CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS IN Y.M.C.A. PROGRAM

ture's wonders, and in the spirit of the Christ who calls to young and old to follow him, we consecrate these grounds to the high purposes for which they have been set apart.

BOARD OF MANAGERS:

With gratitude to those whose affection for their own son has been enlarged to include the love of many, and with the desire so to administer the affairs of these grounds that this worthy aim may be realized

All: We dedicate this camp.

Y.M.C.A. SECRETARIES:

Inspired by the trust placed in the hands of the Young Men's Christian Association, and eager to use the best skills of its profession to assist boys in growing to Christian manhood

All: We dedicate this camp.

CAMP LEADERS:

In appreciation for the opportunity of a field of service to youth, and in the earnest desire to do all we can to enable boys to grow in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man

All: We dedicate this camp.

Boys: Thankful for the arching sky and ample fields, and with the desire to understand better all living things, to deepen our friendship with each other, and to increase our love for the Creator of all

All: We dedicate this camp.

All: With renewed allegiance to the basic objectives of the Young Men's Christian Association: to aid in the development of Christian standards of living, conduct, and life purposes; to emphasize reverence for God, responsibility for the common good, respect for personality, and the application of the Golden Rule in human relationships, we dedicate this camp.

Silence

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison):

O God, who in all the experiences of life dost call us steadfastly to follow thee, we rejoice in every opportunity of working with thee.

We thank thee for this place of outdoor beauty, for him in whose memory it has been set apart, and for those who have given it.

Make it a place that radiates the highest ideals of Christian living. Guide its leaders, and early stamp it with a spirit that shall be a sustaining memory to all who share its life, that shall bring hours of joy to youth, and that shall send them back to their homes refreshed and inspired.

May the Lord of the heavens, and the earth, the God of the tree sentinels, who watch and guard over us in their beauty and strength, grant us an abiding love of these his holy folk, and a lasting desire to keep his world ever beautiful. Amen.

INDEX OF ASSOCIATIONS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) Northeastern Branch, Detroit, Mich. | (32) Centre Avenue Branch Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., Pittsburgh, Pa. |
| (2) South Side Y.M.C.A., St. Louis, Mo. | (33) South Buffalo Branch Y.M.C.A., Buffalo, N. Y. |
| (3) Evanston, Ill. | (34) Charlotte, N. C. |
| (4) Eau Claire, Wis. | (35) Cleveland Central Y.M.C.A., Ohio |
| (5) Huntington Avenue Branch, Boston, Mass. | (36) Evanston, Ill. |
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| (26) Tucson, Ariz. | (57) Flatbush Branch, Brooklyn, N. Y. |
| (27) Hannan Branch, Detroit, Mich. | (58) Mansfield, Ohio |
| (28) Central Branch, Rochester, N. Y. | (59) South Side Y.M.C.A., Toledo, Ohio |
| (29) Berkeley, Calif. | (60) Columbus, Ga. |
| (30) Erie, Pa. | (61) San Fernando Valley Y.M.C.A., a branch of the Los Angeles Y.M.C.A. |
| (31) Perth Amboy, N. J. | (62) Lake Charles, La. |
| | (63) Alhambra, Calif. |
| | (64) Milwaukee, Wis. |

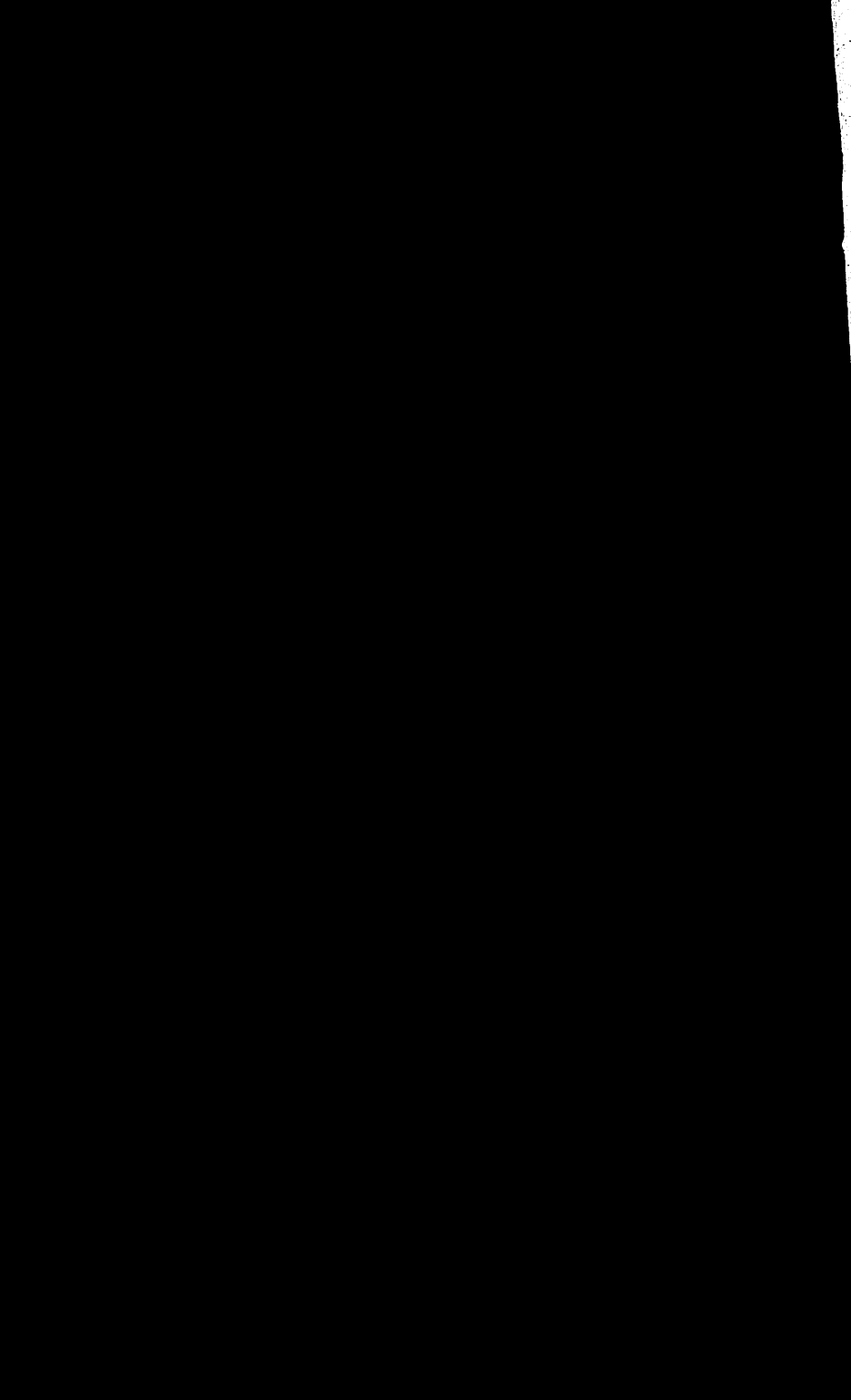
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|---|--|
| (65) Altoona, Pa. | (80) Northeast Branch, Kansas City, Mo. |
| (66) Houston, Tex. | (81) Fort Wayne, Ind. |
| (67) Paterson, N. J. | (82) Greensburg, Pa. |
| (68) Washington, Pa. | (83) New York Central Railroad Y.M.C.A., Cleveland, Ohio |
| (69) Hyde Park Branch, Boston, Y.M.C.A. | (84) Detroit, Mich. |
| (70) Washington, D. C. | (85) Shreveport, La. |
| (71) Muscatine, Iowa | (86) Green Bay, Wis. |
| (72) Colorado Springs, Colo. | (87) Pittsburgh, Pa. |
| (73) Canton, Ohio | (88) Western District, Pennsylvania State Y.M.C.A. |
| (74) Sterling-Rock Falls, Ill. | (89) Butler, Pa. |
| (75) Gary, Ind. | (90) Indianapolis, Ind. |
| (76) Johnstown, Pa. | (91) Rochester, N. Y. |
| (77) Pitcairn, Pa. | (92) Central Branch, Baltimore, Md. |
| (78) Sunbury, Pa. | |
| (79) Suburban Branch Y.M.C.A., Cincinnati, Ohio | |

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES (not numbered)

- | | |
|---|---|
| Brooklyn-Queens Y.M.C.A., p. 135. | Cincinnati, Ohio, University Branch, p. 109. |
| Buffalo, N. Y., p. 100. | Cone Memorial Y.M.C.A., Greensboro, N. C., p. 98. |
| Chicago (Metropolitan Board), p. 116. | Indiana State Y.M.C.A., p. 85. |
| Chicago Central, p. 116. | New York City (Metropolitan Board), p. 65. |
| Cincinnati, Ohio, Central Parkway Branch, p. 108. | Seattle, Wash., p. 78. |
| Trenton, N. J., p. 111. | |

TOPICAL INDEX

- Bible study, 21, 50, 52, 58-63, 67-70, 99, 101, 119
- Boards of Directors, 113-118, 126, 136, 140-141
- Boys' clubs, 31-41, 59, 69, 72, 92
- Camping, 42-43, 47, 143-144
- Centennial, 1, 78, 83-84, 115
- Chapels, 106-112
- Church-Y.M.C.A. relations, 11-13, 68, 81-92, 94-96, 97, 103
- Committees on Christian Emphasis, 116, 126-127
- Dormitory residents, 48, 50, 56, 76
- Evangelical emphasis, 7-9, 12, 21, 52-53, 86
- Forums, 21, 61, 64-65, 68
- Gra-Y Clubs, 40, 75, 92-94
- Group work, 20, 32-36, 46-49
- Guidance of individuals, 21, 23, 45-57
- Hi-Y Clubs, 35, 38, 39, 41, 60, 72-73, 75, 83, 85, 87, 92-93, 101
- Home relationships, 65, 79, 81
- Industrial work, 61, 92, 95, 100
- Interfaith relationships, 11-13, 38-39, 41, 66, 67, 76, 92, 94, 100
- Literature, use of, 49-50
- Membership, 22, 23, 53-55
- Physical education, 20, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49, 55, 83
- Recreation, 13-14, 46-47, 88, 90
- School relationships, 74-75, 77, 81-82, 85, 86, 92-96, 103
- Service men, religious programs, 63, 71, 85, 92; returning, 2, 27-28, 53, 92
- Service projects, 21, 35, 122-124
- Social action, 21, 35, 122-124
- Student Associations, 19, 44, 57, 74, 78, 129
- U.S.O. (Army and Navy Y.M.-C.A.), 50, 85, 98, 102
- World Service, 21, 74, 75, 123
- Worship, 22, 23, 36-40, 42, 52, 72-75, 79-80, 91, 93, 102, 106-112, 115-116
- Young men's groups, 43-44



UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



56 503 223

